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THE CHILD UNDER EIGHT

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THE CHILD UNDER EIGHT

BY

E. R. MURRAY

VICE-PRINCIPAL MARIA GREY TRAINING COLLEGE
AUTHOR OF "FROEBEL AS A PIONEER IN MODERN PSYCHOLOGY," ETC.

AND

HENRIETTA BROWN SMITH

LECTURER IN EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, GOLDSMITHS' COLLEGE
EDITOR OF "EDUCATION BY LIFE"

"Is it not marvellous that an infant should be the heir of the whole world, and see those mysteries which the books of the learned never unfold? I knew by intuition those things which since my apostasy I collected again by highest reason."

THOMAS TRAHERNE.

SIXTH IMPRESSION

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE *Modern Educator's Library* has been designed to give considered expositions of the best theory and practice in English education of to-day. It is planned to cover the principal problems of educational theory in general, of curriculum and organisation, of some unexhausted aspects of the history of education, and of special branches of applied education.

The Editor and his colleagues have had in view the needs of young teachers and of those training to be teachers, but since the school and the schoolmaster are not the sole factors in the educative process, it is hoped that educators in general (and which of us is not in some sense or other an educator?) as well as the professional schoolmaster may find in the series some help in understanding precept and practice in education of to-day and to-morrow. For we have borne in mind not only what is but what ought to be. To exhibit the educator's work as a vocation requiring the best possible preparation is the spirit in which these volumes have been written.

No artificial uniformity has been sought or imposed, and while the Editor is responsible for the series in general, the responsibility for the opinions expressed in each volume rests solely with its author.

ALBERT A. COCK.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON,
KING'S COLLEGE.

AUTHORS' PREFACE

We have made this book between us, but we have not collaborated. We know that we agree in all essentials, though our experience has differed. We both desire to see the best conditions for development provided for all children, irrespective of class. We both look forward to the time when the conditions of the Public Elementary School, from the Nursery School up, will be such—in point of numbers, in freedom from pressure, in situation of building, in space both within and without, and in beauty of surroundings—that parents of any class will gladly let their children attend it.

We are teachers and we have dealt mainly with the mental or, as we prefer to call it, the spiritual requirements of children. It is from the medical profession that we must all accept facts about food values, hours of sleep, etc., and the importance of cleanliness and fresh air are now fully recognised. We do, however, feel that there is room for fresh discussion of ultimate aims and of daily procedure. Mr. Clutton Brock has said that the great weakness of English education is the want of a definite aim to put before our children, the want of a philosophy for ourselves. Without some understanding of life and its purpose or meaning, the teacher is at the mercy of every fad and is apt to exalt method above principle. This book is an attempt to gather together certain recognised principles,

and to show in the light of actual experience how these may be applied to existing circumstances.

The day is coming when all teachers will seek to understand the true value of Play, of spontaneous activity in all directions. Its importance is emphasised in nearly all the educational writings of the day, as well in the Senior as in the Junior departments of the school, but we need a full and deep understanding of the saying, "Man is Man only when he plays." It is easy to say we believe it, but it needs strong faith, courage, and wide intelligence to weave such belief into the warp of daily life in school.

E. R. MURRAY.
H. BROWN SMITH.

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PART I

THE CHILD IN THE NURSERY AND KINDERGARTEN

CHAPTER I

"WHAT'S IN A NAME?"

IT is an appropriate time to produce a book on English schools for little children, now that Nursery Schools have been specially selected for notice and encouragement by an enlightened Minister for Education. It was Madame Michaelis, who in 1890 originally and most appropriately used the term Nursery School as the English equivalent of a title suggested by Froebel[1] for his new institution, before he invented the word Kindergarten, a title which, literally translated, ran "Institution for the Care of Little Children."

In England the word Nursery, which implies the idea of nurture, belongs properly to children, though it has been borrowed by the gardener for his young plants. In Germany it was the other way round. Froebel had to invent the term *child garden* to express his idea of the nurture, as opposed to the repression, of the essential nature of the child. Unfortunately the word Kindergarten while being naturalised in England had two distinct meanings attached to it. Well-to-do people began to send their children to a new institution, a child garden or play school

[1] Froebel's *Letters*, trans. Michaelis and Moore, p. 30.

The children of the people, however, already attended Infant Schools, of which the chief feature was what Mr. Caldwell Cook calls "sit-stillery," and here the word Kindergarten, really equivalent to Nursery School, became identified with certain occupations, childlike in origin it is true, but formalised out of all recognition. How a real Kindergarten strikes a child is illustrated by the recent remark from a little new boy who had been with us for perhaps three mornings. "Shall I go up to the nursery now?" he asked.

The first attempt at a Kindergarten was made in 1837, and by 1848 Germany possessed sixteen. In that eventful year came the revolution in Berlin, which created such high hopes, doomed, alas! to disappointment. "Instead of the rosy dawn of freedom," writes Ebers,[1] himself an old Keilhau boy, "in the State the exercise of a boundless arbitrary power, in the Church dark intolerance." It must have been an easy matter to bring charges of revolutionary doctrines against the man who said so innocently, "But I,—I only wanted to train up free-thinking, independent men."

It was from "stony Berlin," as Froebel calls it, that the edict went forth in the name of the Minister of Education entirely prohibiting Kindergartens in Prussia, and the prohibition soon spread. At the present time it seems to us quite fitting that the bitter attack upon Kindergartens should have been launched by Folsung, a schoolmaster, "who began life as an artilleryman." Nor is it less interesting to read that it was under the protection of Von Moltke himself that Oberlin schools were opened to counteract the attractions of the "godless" Kindergarten.

Little wonder that the same man who in 1813 had so gladly taken up arms to resist the invasion of Napoleon, and who had rejoiced with such enthusiasm in the prospect of a free and united Fatherland, should write in 1851:

"Wherefore I have made a firm resolve that if the

[1] Author of *An Egyptian Princess*, etc.

conditions of German life will not allow room for the development of honest efforts for the good of humanity; if this indifference to all higher things continues—then it is my purpose next spring to seek in the land of union and independence a soil where my idea of education may strike deep root."

And to America he might have gone had he lived, but he died three months later, his end hastened by grief at the edict which closed the Kindergartens. The Prussian Minister announced, in this edict, that "it is evident that Kindergartens form a part of the Froebelian socialistic system, the aim of which is to teach the children atheism," and the suggestion that he was anti-Christian cut the old man to the heart. There had been some confusion between Froebel and one of his nephews, who had democratic leanings, and no doubt anything at all democratic did mean atheism to "stony Berlin" and its intolerant autocracy.

For a time, at least in Bavaria, a curious compromise was allowed. If the teacher were a member of the Orthodox Church, she might have her Kindergarten, but if she belonged to one of the Free Churches, it was permissible to open an Infant School, but she must not use the term Kindergarten.

Froebel was by no means of the opinion that, if only the teacher had the right spirit, the name did not matter. Rather did he hold with Confucius, whose answer to the question of a disciple, "How shall I convert the world?" was, "Call things by their right names." He refused to use the word school, because "little children, especially those under six, do not need to be schooled and taught, what they need is opportunity for development." He had great difficulty in selecting a name. Those originally suggested were somewhat cumbrous, *e.g. Institution for the Promotion of Spontaneous Activity in Children*; another was *Self-Teaching Institution*, and there was also the one

which Madame Michaelis translated "*Nursery School for Little Children.*"

But the name Kindergarten expressed just what he wanted: "As in a garden, under God's favour, and by the care of a skilled intelligent gardener, growing plants are cultivated in accordance with Nature's laws, so here in our child garden shall the noblest of all growing things, men (that is, children), be cultivated in accordance with the laws of their own being, of God and of Nature."

To one of his students he writes: "You remember well enough how hard we worked and how we had to fight that we might elevate the Darmstadt crèche, or rather Infant School, by improved methods and organisation until it became a true Kindergarten. . . . Now what was the outcome of all this, even during my own stay at Darmstadt? Why, the fetters which always cripple a crèche or an Infant School, and which seem to cling round its very name —these fetters were allowed to remain unbroken. Every one was pleased with so faithful a mistress as yourself, . . . yet they withheld from you the main condition of unimpeded development, that of the freedom necessary to every young healthy and vigorous plant. . . . Is there really such importance underlying the mere name of a system?—some one might ask. Yes, there is. . . . It is true that any one watching your teaching would observe *a new spirit* infused into it, *expressing and fulfilling the child's own wants and desires.* You would strike him as personally capable, but you would fail to strike him as priestess of the idea which God has now called to life within man's bosom, and of the struggle towards the realisation of that idea—*education by development—the destined means of raising the whole human race.* . . . No man can acquire fresh knowledge, even at a school, beyond the measure which his own stage of development fits him to receive. . . . Infant Schools are nothing but a contradiction of child-nature. Little children

especially those under school age, ought not to be schooled and taught, what they need is opportunity for development. This idea lies in the very name of a Kindergarten. . . . And the name is absolutely necessary to describe the first education of children."

For an actual definition of what Froebel meant by his Nursery School for Little Children or Kindergarten, it is only fair to go to the founder himself. He has left us two definitions or descriptions, one announced shortly before the first Kindergarten was opened, which runs:

"An institution for the fostering of human life, through the cultivation of the human instincts of activity, of investigation and of construction in the child, as a member of the family, of the nation and of humanity; an institution for the self-instruction, self-education and self-cultivation of mankind, as well as for all-sided development of the individual through play, through creative self-activity and spontaneous self-instruction."

A second definition is given in Froebel's reply to a proposal that he should establish "my system of education —education by development"—in London, Paris or the United States:

"We also need establishments for training quite young children in their first stage of educational development, where their training and instruction shall be based upon their own free action or spontaneity acting under proper rules, these rules not being arbitrarily decreed, but such as must arise by logical necessity from the child's mental and bodily nature, regarding him as a member of the great human family; such rules as are, in fact, discovered by the actual observation of children when associated together in companies. These establishments bear the name of Kindergartens."

Unfortunately there are but few pictures of Froebel's own Kindergarten, but there seems to have been little

formality in its earliest development. An oft-told story is that of Madame von Marenholz in 1847 going to watch the proceedings of "an old fool," as the villagers called him, who played games with the village children. A less well-known account is given by Col. von Arnswald, again a Keilhau boy, who visited Blankenberg in 1839, when Froebel had just opened his first Kindergarten.

"Arriving at the place, I found my Middendorf[1] seated by the pump in the market-place, surrounded by a crowd of little children. Going near them I saw that he was engaged in mending the jacket of a boy. By his side sat a little girl busy with thread and needle upon another piece of clothing; one boy had his feet in a bucket of water washing them carefully; other girls and boys were standing round attentively looking upon the strange pictures of real life before them, and waiting for something to turn up to interest them personally. Our meeting was of the most cordial kind, but Middendorf did not interrupt the business in which he was engaged. 'Come, children,' he cried, 'let us go into the garden!' and with loud cries of joy the little folk with willing feet followed the splendid-looking, tall man, running all round him.

"The garden was not a garden, however, but a barn, with a small room and an entrance hall. In the entrance Middendorf welcomed the children and played a round game with them, ending with the flight of the little ones into the room, where each of them sat down in his place on the bench and took his box of building blocks. For half an hour they were all busy with their blocks, and then came 'Come, children, let us play "spring and spring."' And when the game was finished they went away full of joy and life, every one giving his little hand for a grateful good-bye."

Here in this earliest of Free Kindergartens are certain essentials. Washing and mending, the alternation of con-

[1] One of Froebel's most devoted helpers.

structive play with active exercise, rhythmic game and song, and last but not least human kindliness and courtesy. The shelter was but a barn, but there are things more important than premises.

Froebel died too soon to see his ideals realised, but he had sown the seed in the heart of at least one woman with brain to grasp and will to execute. As early as 1873 the Froebelians had established something more than the equivalent of the Montessori Children's Houses under the name of Free Kindergartens or People's Kindergartens. It will bring this out more clearly if, without referring here to any modern experiments in America, in England and Scotland, or in the Dominions, we quote the description of an actual People's Kindergarten or Nursery School as it was established nearly fifty years ago.

The moving spirit of this institution was Henrietta Schrader, Froebel's own grand-niece, trained by him, and of whom he said that she, more than any other, had most truly understood his views.

The whole institution was called the Pestalozzi-Froebel House. The Prussian edict, which abolished the Kindergarten almost before it had started, was now rescinded, and our own Princess Royal[1] gave warm support to this new institution. The description here quoted was actually written in 1887, when the institution had been in existence for fourteen years:

"The purpose of the National Kindergarten is to provide the necessary and natural help which poor mothers require, who have to leave their children to themselves.

"The establishment contains:—

"(1) The Kindergarten proper, a National Kindergarten with four classes for children from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 years old.

"(2) The Transition Class, only held in the morning for children about 6 or $6\frac{1}{2}$ years old.

[1] The Crown Princess of Prussia, afterwards the Empress Frederick.

"(3) The Preparatory School, for children from 6 to 7 or $7\frac{1}{2}$ years old.

"(4) The School of Handwork, for children from 6 to 10 or older.

"Dinners are provided for those children whose parents work all day away from home at a trifling charge of a halfpenny and a penny. Also, for a trifle, poor children may receive assistance of various kinds in illness, or may have milk or baths through the kindness of the kindred 'Association for the Promotion of Health in the Household.'

"In the institution we are describing there is a complete and well-furnished kitchen, a bathroom, a courtyard with sand for digging, with pebbles and pine-cones, moss, shells and straw, etc., a garden, and a series of rooms and halls suitably furnished and arranged for games, occupations, handwork and instruction.

"The occupations pursued in the Kindergarten are the following: free play of a child by itself; free play of several children by themselves; associated play under the guidance of a teacher; gymnastic exercises; several sorts of handwork suited to little children; going for walks; learning music, both instrumental (on the method of Madame Wiseneder[1]) and vocal; learning and repetition of poetry; story-telling; looking at really good pictures; aiding in domestic occupations; gardening; and the usual systematic ordered occupations of Froebel. Madame Schrader is steadfastly opposed to that conception of the Kindergarten which insists upon mathematically shaped materials for the Froebelian occupations. Her own words are: 'The children find in our institution every encouragement to develop their capabilities and powers by use; not by their selfish use to their own personal advantage, but by their use in the loving service of others.

[1] From certain old photographs, I suppose this to have been what we now call a Kindergarten Band.

The longing to help people and to accomplish little pieces of work proportioned to their feeble powers is constant in children; and lies alongside of their need for that free and unrestrained play which is the business of their life.'

"The elder children are expected to employ themselves in cleaning, taking care of, arranging, keeping in order, and using the many various things belonging to the housekeeping department of the Kindergarten; for example, they set out and clear away the materials required for the games and handicrafts; they help in cleaning the rooms, furniture and utensils; they keep all things in order and cleanliness; they paste together torn wallpapers or pictures, they cover books, and they help in the cooking and in preparations for it; in laying the tables · in washing up the plates and dishes, etc. The children gain in this manner the simple but most important foundations of their later duties as housekeepers and householders, and at the same time learn to regard these duties as things done in the service of others."

It is worth while to notice the order in which the necessities of this place are described. First comes a kitchen and next a bathroom, then an out-of-doors playground with abundant material for gaining ideas through action—sand, pebbles, pine-cones, moss, shells and straw. Then comes the garden, and only after all these, the rooms and halls for indoors games, handwork and instruction. It is worth while also to note the prominence given to play, music, poetry and story-telling, pictures, domestic occupations and gardening, all preceding the "systematic and ordered occupations" which to some have seemed so all-important.

If we compare this with the current ideas about Nursery Schools, we do not find that it falls much below the present ideal. There has been a time when some of us feared that only the bodily needs of the little child were to be considered, but the "Regulations for Nursery Schools" have

banished such fear. In these the child is regarded as a human being, with spiritual as well as bodily requirements.

To put it shortly, the physical requirements of a child are food, fresh air and exercise, cleanliness and rest. It is not so easy to sum up the requirements of a human soul. The first is sympathy, and though this may spring from parental instinct, it should be nourished by true understanding. Next perhaps comes the need for material, material for investigation, for admiration, for imitation and for construction or creation. Power of sense-discrimination is important enough, but in this case if we take care of the pounds of admiration and investigation, the pence of sense-discrimination will take care of themselves.

Besides these the child has the essentially human need for social intercourse, for speech, for games, for songs and stories, for pictures and poetry. He must have opportunity both to imitate and to share in the work and life around him; he must be an individual among other individuals, a necessary part of a whole, allowed to give as well as to receive service. In the National Kindergarten of 1873 no one of these requirements is overlooked except the provision for sleep, and from old photographs we know that this, too, was considered.

Nursery Schools are needed for children of all classes. It is not only the children of the poor who require sympathy and guidance from those specially qualified by real grasp of the facts of child-development. Well-to-do mothers, too, often leave their children to ignorant and untrained servants, or to the equally untrained and hardly less ignorant nursery governess.

Mothers in small houses have much to do; making beds and washing dishes, sweeping and dusting, baking and cooking, making and mending, not to mention tending an infant or tending the sick, leave little leisure for sympathy with the adventuring and investigating propensities natural

and desirable in a healthy child between three and five. There are innumerable Kindergartens open only in the morning for the children of those who can afford to pay, and these could well be multiplied and assisted just as far as is necessary. In towns, at least, mothers with but small incomes would gladly pay a moderate fee to have their little ones, especially their sturdy little boys, guarded from danger and trained to good habits, yet allowed freedom for happy activity.

Kindergartens and Nursery Schools ought to be as much as possible fresh-air schools. They should never be large or the home atmosphere must disappear. They should always have grassy spaces and common flowers, and they ought to be within easy reach of the children's homes.

There must for the present be certain differences between the Free Kindergarten or Nursery School for the poor and for those whose parents are fairly well-to-do. In both cases we must supply what the children need. If the mother must go out to work, the child requires a home for the day, and the Nursery School must make arrangements for feeding the children. All little children are the better for rest and if possible for sleep during the day; but for those who live in overcrowded rooms, where quiet and restful sleep in good air is impossible, the need for daily sleep is very great. All Free Kindergartens arrange for this.

Most important also is the training to cleanliness. This is not invariably the lot even of those who come from apparently comfortable homes to attend fee-paying Kindergartens, and among the poor, differences in respect of cleanliness are very great. But soap and hot water do cost money and washing takes time, and the modern habit of brushing teeth has not yet been acquired by all classes of the community. The Free Kindergartens provide for necessary washing, each child is provided with its own

tooth-brush; and tooth-brush drill is a daily practice, somewhat amusing to witness. The best baby rooms in our Infant Schools carry out the same practices, and these are likely to be turned into Nursery Schools.

It cannot yet be accepted as conclusively proved that a completely open-air life is the best in our climate. We have not yet sufficient statistics. No doubt children do improve enormously in open-air camps, but so they do in ordinary Nursery Schools, where they are clean, happy and well fed, and where they live a regular life with daily sleep. Housing conditions complicate the problem, and all children must suffer who sleep in crowded, noisy, unventilated rooms.

Up to the present time Nursery Schools have been provided by voluntary effort entirely, and far too little encouragement has been given to those enlightened headmistresses of Infant Schools who have tried to give to their lowest classes Nursery School conditions. Since the passing of Mr. Fisher's Education Bill, however, we are entitled to hope that soon, for all children in the land, there may be the opportunity of a fair start under the care of "a person with breadth of outlook and imagination," the equivalent of Froebel's "skilled intelligent gardener."

In the following chapter an attempt is made to explain how it is that so many years ago Froebel reached his vision of what a child is, and of what a child needs, and the considerations on which he based his "Nursery School for Little Children" or "Self-Teaching Institution."

CHAPTER II

THE BIOLOGIST EDUCATOR

> Progress, man's distinctive mark alone,
> Not God's, and not the beasts': God is, they are,
> Man partly is and wholly hopes to be.

"A LARGE bright room, . . . a sandheap in one corner, a low tub or bath of water in another, a rope ladder, a swing, steps to run up and down and such like, a line of black or green board low down round the wall, little rough carts and trolleys, boxes which can be turned into houses, or shops, or pretence ships, etc., a cooking stove of a very simple nature, dolls of all kinds, wooden animals, growing plants in boxes, an aquarium."

Any Froebelian would recognise this as the description of a more or less ideal Kindergarten or Nursery School, and yet the writer had probably never read a page that Froebel wrote. On the contrary, she shows her entire ignorance of the real Kindergarten by calling it "pretty employments devised by adults and imposed at set times by authority."

The description is taken from a very able address on "Child Nature and Education" delivered some years ago by Miss Hoskyns Abrahall. It is quoted here, because, for her conception of right surroundings for young children, the speaker has gone to the very source from which Froebel took his ideas—she has gone to what Froebel indeed called

"the only true source, life itself," and she writes from the point of view of the biologist.

There exists at present, in certain quarters, a belief that the Kindergarten is old-fashioned, out of date, more especially that it has no scientific basis. It is partly on this account that the ideas of Dr. Maria Montessori, who has approached the question of the education of young children from the point of view of medical science, have been warmly welcomed by so large a circle. But neither in England nor in America does that circle include the Froebelians, and this for several reasons. For one thing, much that the general public has accepted as new—and in this general public must be included weighty names, men of science, educational authorities, and others who have never troubled to inquire into the meaning of the Kindergarten — are already matters of everyday life to the Froebelian. Among these comes the idea of training to service for the community, and the provision of suitable furniture, little chairs and tables, which the children can move about, and low cupboards for materials, all of which tend to independence and self-control.

It is a more serious stumbling-block to the Froebelian that Dr. Montessori, while advocating freedom in words, has really set strict limits to the natural activities of children by laying so much stress on her "didactic apparatus," the intention of which is formal training in sense-discrimination. This material, which is an adaptation and enlargement of that provided by Séguin for his mentally deficient children, is certainly open to the reproach of having been "devised by adults." It is formal, and the child is not permitted to use it for his own purposes.

Before everything else, however, comes the fact that in no place has Dr. Montessori shown that she has made any study of play, or that she attaches special importance to the play activities, or natural activities of childhood, on which

the Kindergarten is founded. This is probably accounted for in that her first observations were made on deficient children who are notably wanting in initiative.

Among these "play activities" we should include the child's perpetual imitation or pretence, a matter which Dr. Montessori entirely fails to understand, as shown in her more recent book, where she treats of imagination. Here she maintains that only the children of the comparatively poor ride upon their fathers' walking-sticks or construct coaches of chairs, that this "is not a proof of imagination but of an unsatisfied desire," and that rich children who own ponies and who drive out in motor-cars "would be astonished to see the delight of children who imagine themselves to be drawn along by stationary armchairs." Imitative play has, of course, nothing to do with poverty or riches, but is, as Froebel said long since, the outcome of an imitative impulse, sadly wanting in deficient children, an impulse which prompts the child of all lands, of all times and of all classes to imitate or dramatise, and so to gain some understanding of everything and of every person he sees around.

The work of Dr. Montessori has helped enormously in the movement, begun long since, for greater freedom in our Infant Schools; freedom, not from judicious guidance and authority, but from rigid time-tables and formal lessons, and from arbitrary restrictions, as well as freedom for the individual as apart from the class. The best Kindergartens and Infant Schools had already discarded time-tables, and Kindergarten classes have always been small enough to give the individual a fair chance. Froebel himself constantly urged that the child should become familiar with "both the strongly opposed elements of his life, the individual determining and directing side, and the general ordered and subordinated side." He urged the early development of the social consciousness as well as insisting

on expansion of individuality, but it is always difficult to combine the two, and most Kindergarten teachers will benefit by learning from Dr. Montessori to apply the method of individual learning to a greater extent.

We are, however, fully prepared to maintain that Froebel, even in 1840, had a wider and a deeper realisation of the needs of the child than has as yet been attained by the Dottoressa.[1] In order to make this clear, it is proposed to compare the theories of Froebel with the conclusions of a biologist. For biology has a wider and a saner outlook than medical science; it does not start from the abnormal, but with life under normal conditions.

In the address, from which the opening words of this chapter are quoted, it is suggested that a capable biologist be set to deal with education, but he is to be freed "from all preconceived ideas derived from accepted tradition." After such fundamentals as food and warmth, light, air and sleep, the first problems considered by this Biologist Educator are stages of growth, their appropriate activities, and the stimuli necessary to evoke them. Always he bears in mind that "interference with a growing creature is a hazardous business," and takes as his motto "When in doubt, refrain."

To discover the natural activities of the child, the biologist relies upon, first, observation of the child himself, secondly, upon his knowledge of the nervous system, and thirdly, upon his knowledge of the past history of the race. From these he comes to a very pertinent conclusion, viz. "The general outcome of this is that the safe way of educating children is by means of Play," play being defined as "the natural manifestation of the child's activities; systematic in that it follows the lines of physiological

[1] Her latest publication regarding the instruction—for it is not education—of older children makes this even more plain. For here is no discussion of what children at this stage require, but a mere plunge into "subjects" in which formal grammar takes a foremost place.

development, but without the hard and fast routine of the time-table." [1]

It is easy to show that although Froebel was pre-Darwinian, he had been in close touch with scientists who were working at theories of development, and that he was largely influenced by Krause, who applied the idea of organic development to all departments of social science. It was because Froebel was himself, even in 1826, the Biologist Educator desiring to break with preconceived ideas and traditions that he wished one of his pupils had been able to "call your work by its proper name, and so make evident the real nature of the new spirit you have introduced." [2]

But Froebel was more than a biologist, he was a philosopher and an idealist. Such words have sometimes been used as terms of reproach, but wisdom can only be justified of her children.

At the back of all Froebel has to say about "The Education of the Human Being" lies his conception of what the human being is. And it is impossible fully to understand why Froebel laid so much stress on spontaneous play unless we go deeper than the province of the biologist without in the least minimising the importance of biological knowledge to educational theory. As the biologist defines play as "the natural manifestation of the child's activities," so Froebel says "play at first is just natural life." But to him the true inwardness of spontaneous play lies in the fact that it is spontaneous—so far as anything in the universe can be spontaneous. For spontaneous response to environment is self-expression, and out of self-expression comes selfhood, consciousness of self. If we are to understand Froebel at all, we must begin with the answer he

[1] It is in this connection that the Kindergarten is stigmatised as "pretty employments devised by adults and imposed at set times by authority," an opinion evidently gained from the way in which the term has been misused in a type of Infant School now fast disappearing.

[2] See p. 4.

found, or accepted, from Krause and others for his first question, What is that self?

Before reaching the question of how to educate, it seemed to him necessary to consider not only the purpose or aim of education, but the purpose or aim of human existence, the purpose of all and any existence, even whether there is any purpose in anything; and that brings us to what he calls "the groundwork of all," of which a summary is given in the following paragraphs.

In the universe we can perceive plan, purpose or law, and behind this there must be some great Mind, "a living, all-pervading, energising, self-conscious and hence eternal Unity" whom we call God. Nature and all existing things are a revelation of God.

As Bergson speaks of the *élan vital* which expresses itself from infinity to infinity, so Froebel says that behind everything there is force, and that we cannot conceive of force without matter on which it can exercise itself. Neither can we think of matter without any force to work upon it, so that "force and matter mutually condition one another," we cannot think one without the other.

This force expresses itself in all ways, the whole universe is the expression of the Divine, but "man is the highest and most perfect earthly being in whom the primordial force is spiritualised so that man feels, understands and knows his own power." Conscious development of one's own power is the triumph of spirit over matter, therefore human development is spiritual development. So while man is the most perfect earthly being, yet, with regard to spiritual development he has returned to a first stage and "must raise himself through ascending degrees of consciousness" to heights as yet unknown, "for who has measured the limits of God-born mankind?"

Self-consciousness is the special characteristic of man. No other animal has the power to become conscious of

himself because man alone has the chance of failure. The lower animals have definite instincts and cannot fail, *i.e.* cannot learn.[1] Man wants to do much, but his instincts are less definite and most actions have to be learned; it is by striving and failing that he learns to know not only his limitations but the power that is within him—his self.

According to Froebel, "the aim of education is the steady progressive development of mankind, there is and can be no other"; and, except as regards physiological knowledge inaccessible in his day, he is at one with the biologist as to how we are to find out the course of this development. First, by looking into our own past; secondly, by the observation of children as individuals as well as when associated together, and by comparison of the results of observation; thirdly, by comparison of these with race history and race development.

Froebel makes much of observation of children. He writes to a cousin begging her to "record in writing the most important facts about each separate child," and adds that it seems to him "most necessary for the comprehension of child-nature that such observations should be made public, . . . of the greatest importance that we should interchange the observations we make so that little by little we may come to know the grounds and conditions of what we observe, that we may formulate their laws." He protests that even in his day "the observation, development and guidance of children in the first years of life up to the proper age of school" is not up to the existing level of "the present stage of human knowledge or the advance of science and art"; and he states that it is "an essential part" of his undertaking "to call into life *an institution for the preparation of teachers trained for the care of children through observation of their life.*"

In speaking of the stages of development of the indi-

[1] This would nowadays be considered too sweeping an assertion.

vidual, Froebel says that 'there is no order of importance in the stages of human development except the order of succession, in which the earlier is always the more important," and from that point of view we ought "to consider childhood as the most important stage, . . . a stage in the development of the Godlike in the earthly and human." He also emphasises that "the vigorous and complete development and cultivation of each successive stage depends on the vigorous, complete and characteristic development of each and all preceding stages."

So the duty of the parent is to "look as deeply as possible into the life of the child to see what he requires for his present stage of development," and then to "scrutinise the environment to see what it offers . . . to utilise all possibilities of meeting normal needs," to remove what is hurtful, or at least to "admit its defects" if they cannot give the child what his nature requires. "If parents offer what the child does not need," he says, "they will destroy the child's faith in their sympathetic understanding." The educator is to "bring the child into relations and surroundings in all respects adapted to him" but affording a minimum of opportunity of injury, "guarding and protecting" but not interfering, unless he is certain that healthy development has already been interrupted. It is somewhat remarkable that Froebel anticipated even the conclusions of modern psycho-analysis in his views about childish faults. "The sources of these," he says, are "neglect to develop certain sides of human life and, secondly, early distortion of originally good human powers by arbitrary interference with the orderly course of human development . . . . a suppressed or perverted good quality — a good tendency, only repressed, misunderstood or misguided—lies at the bottom of every shortcoming." Hence the only remedy even for wickedness is to find and foster, build up and guide what has been repressed. It may be necessary

to interfere and even to use severity, but only when the educator is sure of unhealthy growth. The motto of the biologist on the subject of interference—"When in doubt, refrain"—exactly expresses Froebel's doctrine of "passive or following" education, following, that is, the nature of the child, and "passive" as opposed to arbitrary interference.

Free from this, the child will follow his natural impulses, which are to be trusted as much as those of any other young animal; in other words, he will play, he will manifest his natural activities. "The young human being —still, as it were, in process of creation—would seek, though unconsciously yet decidedly and surely, as a product of nature that which is in itself best, and in a form adapted to his condition, his disposition, his powers and his means. Thus the duckling hastens to the pond and into the water, while the chicken scratches the ground and the young swallow catches its food upon the wing. We grant space and time to young plants and animals because we know that, in accordance with the laws that live in them, they will develop properly and grow well; arbitrary interference with their growth is avoided because it would hinder their development; but the young human being is looked upon as a piece of wax, a lump of clay, which man can mould into what he pleases. O man, who roamest through garden and field, through meadow and grove, why dost thou close thy mind to the silent teaching of nature? Behold the weed; grown among hindrances and constraint, how it scarcely yields an indication of inner law; behold it in nature, in field or garden, how perfectly it conforms to law —a beautiful sun, a radiant star, it has burst from the earth! Thus, O parents, could your children, on whom you force in tender years forms and aims against their nature, and who, therefore, walk with you in morbid and unnatural deformity—thus could your children, too, unfold in beauty and develop in harmony."

At first play is activity for the sake of activity, not for the sake of results, "of which the child has as yet no idea." Very soon, however, having man's special capacity of learning through experience, the child does gather ideas. By this time he has passed through the stage of infancy, and now his play becomes to the philosopher the highest stage of human development at this stage, because now it is self-expression.

When Froebel wrote in 1826, there had been but little thought expended on the subject of play, and probably none on human instincts, which were supposed to be non-existent. The hope he expressed that some philosopher would take up these subjects has now been fulfilled, and we ought now to turn to what has been said on a subject all-important to those who desire to help in the education of young children.

CHAPTER III

LEARNING BORN OF PLAY

Play, which is the business of their lives.

THERE may be nothing new under the sun, but it does seem to be a fair claim to make for Froebel that no one before or since his time has more fully realised the value to humanity of what in childhood goes by the name of play. Froebel had distinct theories about play, and he put his theories into actual practice, not only when he founded the Kindergarten, but in his original school for older children at Keilhau.

Before going into its full meaning, it may be well first to meet the most common misconception about play. It is not surprising that those who have given the subject no special consideration should regard play from the ordinary adult standpoint, and think of it as entirely opposed to work, as relaxation of effort. But the play of a child covers so much that it is startling to find a real psychologist writing that "education through play" is "a pernicious proposition."[1] Statements of this kind spring from the mistaken idea, certainly not derived from observation, that play involves no effort, that it runs in the line of least resistance, and that education through play means therefore education without effort, without training in self-

[1] *The Educative Process*, p. 255 (Bagley).

control, education without moral training. The case for the Kindergarten is the opposite of this. Education through play is advocated just because of the effort it calls forth, just because of the way in which the child, and later the boy or girl, throws his whole energy into it. What Froebel admired, what he called "the most beautiful expression of childlife," was "the child that plays thoroughly, with spontaneous determination, perseveringly, until physical fatigue forbids—a child wholly absorbed in his play—a child that has fallen asleep while so absorbed." That child, he said, would be "a thorough determined man, capable of self-sacrifice for the promotion of the welfare of himself and others." It is because "play is not trivial, but highly serious and of deep significance," that he appeals to mothers to cultivate and foster it, and to fathers to protect and guard it.

The Kindergarten position can be summed up in a sentence from Dr. Clouston's *Hygiene of Mind*: "Play is the real work of children." Froebel calls activity of sense and limb "the first germ," and "play, building and modelling the tender blossoms of the constructive impulse"; and this, he says, is "the moment when man is to be prepared for future industry, diligence and productive activity." He points out, too, the importance of noticing the habits which come from spontaneous self-employment, which may be habits of indolent ease if the child is not allowed to be as active as his nature requires.

There were no theories of play in Froebel's day, but he had certainly read *Levana*, and in all probability he knew what Schiller had said in his *Letters on Aesthetic Education*. The play theories are now too well known to require more than a brief recapitulation.

It will generally be allowed that the distinctive feature of play as opposed to work is that of spontaneity. The action itself is of no consequence, one man's play is another

man's work. Nor does it seem to matter whence comes the feeling of compulsion in work, whether from pressure of outer necessity, or from an inner necessity like the compelling force of duty. Where there is joy in creation or in discovery the work and play of the genius approach the standpoint of the child,

> Indulging every instinct of the soul,
> There, where law, life, joy, impulse are one thing.

In the play of early childhood there may be freedom, not only from adult authority, but even from the restrictions of nature or of circumstances since "let's pretend" annihilates time and space and all material considerations.

Among theories of play first comes what is known as the Schiller-Spencer theory, in which play is attributed to the accumulation of surplus energy. When the human being has more energy than he requires in order to supply the bodily needs of himself and his family, then he feels impelled to use it. As the activities of his daily life are the only ones known to him, he fights his battles over again, he simulates the serious business of life, and transfers, for instance, the incidents of the chase into a dance. In this way he reaches artistic creation, so that "play is the first poetry of the human being."

As an opposite of this we get a Re-creation theory, where play, if not too strenuous, understood as a change of occupation, rests and re-creates.

Another theory is that of recapitulation, which has been emphasised by Stanley Hall, according to which children play hunting and chasing games, or find a fascination in making tents, because they are passing through that stage of development in which their primitive ancestors lived by hunting or dwelt in tents.

Lastly, a most interesting theory is that which is associated with the name of Groos, and which is best expressed in the sentence: "Animals do not play because

they are young, but they have their youth because they must play," play being regarded as the preparation for future life activities. The kitten therefore practises chasing a cork, the puppy worries boots and gloves, the kid practises jumping, and so on.

A full account of play will probably embrace all these theories, and though they were not formulated in his day, Froebel overlooked none, though he may have laid special stress on the preparation side. Yet another value of play emphasised by Professor Royce, viz. its enormous importance from the point of view of mental initiative, is strongly urged by Froebel. Professor Royce argues that "in the mere persistence of the playful child one has a factor whose value for mental initiative it is hard to overestimate." Without this "passionately persistent repetition," and without also the constant varying of apparently useless activities, the organism, says Professor Royce, "would remain the prey of the environment."

To Froebel, as we have seen, the human being is the climax of animal evolution and the starting-point of psychical development. The lower animal, he maintained, as all will now agree, is hindered by his definite instincts, but the instincts or instinctive tendencies of the human being are so undefined that there is room for spontaneity, for new forms of conduct.

Professor Royce says that "a general view of the place which beings with minds occupy in the physical world strongly suggests that their organisms may especially have significance as places for the initiation of more or less novel types of activity." And to Froebel the chief significance of play lies in this spontaneity.

"Play is the highest phase of human development at this stage, because it is spontaneous expression of what is within produced by an inner necessity and impulse. Play is the most characteristic, most spiritual manifestation of

man at this stage, and, at the same time, is typical of human life as a whole."

These various theories seem to reinforce rather than to contradict each other, and it is more important to avoid running any to an extreme than to differentiate between them. In the case of recapitulation, we must certainly bear in mind Froebel's warning that the child "should be treated as having in himself the present, past and future." So, as Dr. Drummond says: "If we feel constrained to present him with a tent because Abraham lived in one, he no doubt enters into the spirit of the thing and accepts it joyfully. But he also annexes the ball of string and the coffee canister to fit up telephonic communication with the nursery." He may play robbers and hide and seek because he has reached a "hunting and capture" stage, but the physiologist points out that violent exercise is a necessity for his circulation and nutrition, and to practise swift flight to safety is useful even in modern times.[1] Gardening may take us back to an agricultural stage, but digging is most useful as a muscular exercise, and "watering" is scientific experiment and adds to the feeling of power, while the flowers themselves appeal to the aesthetic side of the sense-play, which is not limited to any age, though conspicuous so soon.

Froebel recognised many kinds of play. He realised that much of the play of boyhood is exercise of physical power, and that it must be of a competitive nature because the boy wants to measure his power. Even in 1826 he urges the importance not only of town playgrounds but of play leaders, that the play may be full of life. Among games for boys he noted some still involving sense-play, as hiding games, colour games and shooting at a mark, which need quick hearing and sight, intellectual plays exercising

[1] An up-to-date riddle asks the difference between the quick and the dead, and answers, "The quick are those who get out of the way of a motor-bus and the dead are those who do not."

thought and judgement, *e.g.* draughts and dramatic games. One form of play which seemed to him most important was constructive play, where there is expression of ideas as well as expression of power. This side of play covers a great deal, and will be dealt with later; its importance in Froebel's eyes lies in the fact that through construction, however simple, the child gains knowledge of his own power and learns "to master himself." Froebel wanted particularly to deepen this feeling of power, and says that the little one who has already made some experiments takes pleasure in the use of sand and clay, "impelled by the previously acquired sense of power he seeks to master the material."

In order to gain real knowledge of himself, of his power, a child needs to compare his power with that of others. This is one reason for the child's ready imitation of all he sees done by others. Another reason for this is that only through real experience or action can a child gain the ideas which he will express later, therefore he must reproduce all he sees or hears.

"In the family the child sees parents and others at work, producing, doing something; consequently he, at this stage, would like to represent what he sees. Be cautious, parents. You can at one blow destroy, at least for a long time, the impulse to activity and to formation if you repel their help as childish, useless or even as a hindrance. . . . Strengthen and develop this instinct; give to your child the highest he now needs, let him add his power to your work, that he may gain the consciousness of his power and also learn to appreciate its limitations."

As the child's sense of power and his self-consciousness deepen he requires possessions of his "very own." Says Froebel: "The feeling of his own power implies and demands also the possession of his own space and his own material belonging exclusively to him. Be his realm, his province,

a corner of the house or courtyard, be it the space of a box or of a closet, be it a grotto, a hut or a garden, the boy at this age needs an external point, chosen and prepared by himself, to which he refers all his activity."

As ideas widen the child's purposes enlarge, and he finds the need for that co-operation which binds human beings together. And so by play enjoyed in common, the feeling of community which is present in the little child is raised to recognition of the rights of others; not only is a sense of justice developed, but also forbearance, consideration and sympathy.

"When the room to be filled is extensive, when the realm to be controlled is large, when the whole to be produced is complex, then brotherly union of similar-minded persons is in place." And we are invited to enter an "education room," where boys of seven to ten are using building blocks, sand, sawdust and green moss brought in from the forest. "Each one has finished his work and he examines it and that of others, and in each rises the desire to unite all in one whole," so roads are made from the village of one boy to the castle of another: the boy who has made a cardboard house unites with another who has made miniature ships from nut-shells, the house as a castle crowns the hill, and the ships float in the lake below, while the youngest brings his shepherd and sheep to graze between the mountain and the lake, and all stand and behold with pleasure and satisfaction the result of their hands.

The educative value of such play has been brought forward in modern times in *Floor Games* by Mr. Wells, *Magic Cities* by Mrs. Nesbit, and notably in Mr. Caldwell Cook's Play City in *The Play Way*.

Joining together for a common purpose does not only belong to younger boys. "What busy tumult among those older boys at the brook! They have built canals, sluices, bridges, etc. . . . at each step one trespasses on the limits

of another realm. Each one claims his right as lord and maker, while he recognises the claims of others, and like States, they bind themselves by strict treaties."

"Every town should have its own common playground for the boys. Glorious results would come from this for the entire community. For, at this period, games, whenever possible, are in common, and develop the feeling and desire for community, and the laws and requirements of community. The boy tries to see himself in his companions, to weigh and measure himself by them, to know and find himself by their help."

"It is the sense of sure and reliable power, the sense of its increase, both as an individual and as a member of the group, that fills the boy with joy during these games. . . . Justice, self-control, loyalty, impartiality, who could fail to catch their fragrance and that of still more delicate blossoms, forbearance, consideration, sympathy and encouragement for the weaker. . . . Thus the games educate the boy for life and awaken and cultivate many social and moral virtues."

In England we have always had respect for boys' games, and more and more, especially in America, people are realising the need for play places and play leaders. But all this was written in 1826, when for ten years Froebel had been experimenting with boys of all ages. At Keilhau play of all kinds had an honoured place. We read of excursions for all kinds of purposes, of Indian games out of Fenimore Cooper, and of "Homeric battles." It was "part of Froebel's plan to have us work with spade and pick-axe," and every boy had his own piece of ground where he might do what he pleased. Ebers, being literary, constructed in his plot a bed of heather on which he lay and read or made verses. The boys built their own stage, painted their own scenery, and in winter once a week they acted classic dramas. Besides this, there was a large and

complete puppet theatre belonging to the school. Bookbinding and carpentry were taught, and at Christmas "the embryo cabinet-maker made boxes with locks and hinges, finished, veneered and polished."

In England in 1917 we have given to us *The Play Way*, in which one who has tried it gives the results of his own experiments in education through play. Mr. Caldwell Cook was not satisfied with the condition of affairs when "school above the Kindergarten is a nuisance because there is no play." His dream is that of a Play School Commonwealth, where education, which is the training of youth, shall be filled with the spirit of youth, namely, "freshness, zeal, happiness, enthusiasm."

The next chapter will show that it has taken us exactly a hundred years to reach as far as public recognition of the Nursery School where play is the only possible motive. It is for the coming generation of teachers to act so that the dream of the Play School Commonwealth shall be realised more quickly. It is a significant fact that the lines quoted as heading for the next chapter are written by a modern schoolmaster.

CHAPTER IV

FROM 1816 TO 1919

Poor mites; you stiffen on a bench
And stoop your curls to dusty laws;
Your petal fingers curve and clench
In slavery to parchment saws;
You suit your hearts to sallow faces
In sullen places:
But no pen
Nor pedantry can make you men.
Yours are the morning and the day:
You should be taught of wind and light;
Your learning should be born of play.

(*Caged*: GEORGE WINTHROP YOUNG.)

HAD England but honoured her own prophets, we should have had Nursery Schools a hundred years ago. In 1816, the year in which Froebel founded his school for older boys at Keilhau, Robert Owen, the Socialist, "following the plan prescribed by Nature," opened a school where children, from two to six, were to dance and sing, to be out-of-doors as much as possible, to learn "when their curiosity induced them to ask questions," and not to be "annoyed with books." They were to be prevented from acquiring bad habits, to be taught what they could understand, and their dispositions were to be trained "to mutual kindness and a sincere desire to contribute all in their power to benefit each other." They "were trained and educated without punishment or the fear of it. . . . A child who acted improperly was not considered an object of blame but of pity, and no unnecessary restraint was imposed on the children."

But the world was not ready. Owen's "Rational Infant School" attracted much notice, and an Infant School Society was founded. But even the enlightened were incapable of understanding that any education was possible without books, and the promoters rightly, though quite unconsciously, condemned themselves when they kept the title Infant School but dropped the qualifying "Rational." Still, Infant Schools had been started and interest had been aroused. When the edict abolishing Kindergartens was promulgated in Germany, some of Froebel's disciples passed to other lands, and Madame von Marenholz came to England in 1854. Already one Kindergarten had been opened by a Madame Ronge, to which Rowland Hill sent his children, and to which Dickens paid frequent visits. In the same year there was held in London an "International Educational Exposition and Congress," and to this Madame von Marenholz sent an exhibit, which was explained by Madame Ronge, and by a Mr. Hoffmann. Dickens, who had watched the actual working of a Kindergarten, gave warm support to the new ideas, and wrote an excellent article on "Infant Gardens" for *Household Words*, urging "that since children are by Infinite Wisdom so created as to find happiness in the active exercise and development of all their faculties, we, who have children round about us, shall no longer repress their energies, tie up their bodies, shut their mouths. . . . The frolic of childhood is not pure exuberance and waste. 'There is often a high meaning in childish play,' said Froebel. Let us study it, and act upon the hints—or more than hints—that Nature gives."

Dr. Henry Barnard represented Connecticut at this Congress, and he took the Kindergarten to America, in whose virgin soil the seed took root, and quickly brought forth abundantly. But the soil was virgin and the fields were ready for planting, for America in these days had nothing corresponding to our Infant Schools. The Kinder-

garten was welcomed by people of influence. Dr. Barnard found his first ally in Miss Peabody, one of whose sisters was married to Nathaniel Hawthorne, while another was the wife of Horace Mann. Miss Peabody began to teach in 1860, but eight years later, after a visit to Europe, she gave up teaching for propaganda work. Owing to her efforts the first Free Kindergarten was opened in Boston in 1870. Philanthropists soon recognised its importance as a social agency, and by 1883 one lady alone supported thirty-one such institutions in Boston and its surroundings. In New York, Dr. Felix Adler established a Free Kindergarten in 1878, and Teachers' College was influential in helping to form an association which supports several. Another name well known in this country is that of Miss Kate Douglas Wiggin,[1] who was a Kindergarten teacher for many years before she became known as a novelist. It is Miss Wiggin who tells of a quaint translation of Kindergarten heard by a San Francisco teacher making friendly visits to the mothers of her children. While she stood on a door-step sympathising with one poor woman she heard a "loud, but not unfriendly" voice from an upper window. "Clear things from under foot!" it pealed in stentorian accents. "The teacher o' the *Kids' Guards* is comin' down the street."

In England things were very different, because of the Infant Schools which had already been established, but which had fallen far below the ideal set up by Robert Owen. As every one knows, the education given in those days to teachers of Elementary Schools was but meagre, and the results were often so bad that, to justify the expenditure of public money, "payment by results" was introduced. In 1870 came the Education Act, and the year 1874 saw a good deal of movement. Miss Caroline Bishop was appointed to lecture to the Infants' teachers

[1] Writer of *Penelope in England*, etc., and of a capital collection of essays entitled *Children's Rights*.

under the London School Board; Miss Heerwart took charge of a training college for Kindergarten teachers in connection with the British and Foreign School Society; the Froebel Society was founded, and Madame Michaelis took the Kindergarten into the newly established High Schools for Girls. For the children of the well-to-do Kindergartens spread rapidly, but for the children of the poor there was no such happiness; the Infant School was too firmly established as a place where children learned to read, write and count, and above all to sit still. Infants' teachers received no special training for their work; their course of study, in which professional training played but a small part, was the same as that prescribed for the teachers of older children. Some colleges, notably The Home and Colonial, Stockwell, and Saffron Walden, did try to give their students some special training, but it was not of much avail, and the word Kindergarten came to mean not Nursery School, as was the idea of its founder, but dictated exercises with Kindergarten material, a kind of manual drill supposed to give "hand and eye training," and with this meaning it made its appearance on the time-table.

Visitors from America were shocked to find no Kindergartens in England, but only large classes of poor little automatons sitting erect with "hands behind" or worse still "hands on heads," and moving only to the word of command. One lady who ultimately found her way to our own Kindergarten told me that she had been informed at the L.C.C. offices that there were no Kindergartens in London.

It was partly the scandalised expressions of these American teachers that stimulated Miss Adelaide Wragge to take her courage into her hands, and in the year 1900 to open the first Mission Kindergarten in England. She called it a Mission, not a Free Kindergarten, partly because the parents paid the trifling fee of one penny per week,

and partly because it was connected with the parish work of Holy Trinity, Woolwich, of which her brother was vicar. The first report says: "The neighbourhood was suitable for the experiment; little children, needing just the kind of training we proposed to give them, abounded everywhere. . . . The Woolwich children were typical slum babies, varying in ages from three to six years; very poor, very dirty, totally untrained in good habits. At first we only admitted a few, and when these began to improve, gradually increased the numbers to thirty-five. They needed great patience and care, but they responded wonderfully to the love given them, and before long they were real Kindergarten children, full of vigour, merriment and self-activity."

As is done in connection with all Free Kindergartens, Parents' Evenings were instituted from the first, and the mothers were helped to understand their children by simple talks.

Sesame House for Home Life Training had been opened six months before this Mission Kindergarten. It was founded by the Sesame Club, and at its head was Miss Schepel, who for twenty years had been at the head of the Pestalozzi Froebel House. The idea of Home Life Training attracted students who were not obliged by stern necessity to earn their daily bread. Though the methods were not quite in line with progressive thought, the atmosphere created by Miss Schepel, warmly seconded by Miss Buckton,[1] was one of enthusiasm in the service of children. The second Nursery School in London had its origin in this enthusiasm. Miss Maufe left Sesame House early in 1903, and started a free Child Garden in West London. Four years later she moved to Westminster to a block of workmen's dwellings erected on the site of the old Millbank Prison. This "child garden" has a special interest from the fact that it was carried on actually in a block of

[1] Author of the beautiful mystery play of *Eager Heart*.

workmen's dwellings like The Children's Houses of a later date. The effort was voluntary and the rooms were small, but, if the experiment had been supported by the authorities, it would have been easy to take down dividing walls to get sufficient space. Miss Maufe gave herself and her income for about twelve years, but difficulties created by the war, the impossibility of finding efficient help and consequent drain upon her own strength have forced her to close her little school, to the grief of the mothers in 48 Ruskin Buildings. Another Sesame House student, Miss L. Hardy, in her charming *Diary of a Free Kindergarten*, takes us from London to Edinburgh, but the first Free Kindergarten in Edinburgh began in 1903 and had a different origin. Miss Howden was an Infants' Mistress in one of the slums, and knew well the needs of little children in that wide street, once decked with lordly mansions, which leads from the Castle to Holyrood Palace. Some of the fine houses are left, but the inhabitants are of the poorest, and Miss Howden left her savings to start a Free Kindergarten in the Canongate. The sum was not large, but it was seed sown in faith, and its harvest has been abundant, for Edinburgh with its population of under 400,000 has five Free Kindergartens, in all of which the children are washed and fed and given restful sleep, as well as taught and trained with intelligence and love. London with its population of 6,000,000 had but eight up to the time of the outbreak of the war.

In 1904 the Froebel Society took part in a Joint Conference at Bradford, where one sitting was devoted to "The Need for Nursery Schools for Children from three to five years at present attending the Public Elementary Schools." The speakers were Mrs. Miall of Leeds, and Miss K. Phillips, who had wide opportunities for knowledge of the unsuitable conditions generally provided for these little children. Among those who joined in this discussion

was Miss Margaret M'Millan, so well known for her pioneer work in connection with School Clinics, and more recently for her now famous Camp School. Miss M'Millan had already done yeoman service on the Bradford Education Committee, but was now resident in London, and she had been warmly welcomed on the Council of the Froebel Society. It was from the date of this Conference that the name Nursery School became general, though it had been used by Madame Michaelis as early as 1891. In the following year, 1905, the Board of Education published its "Reports on Children under Five Years of Age," with its prefatory memorandum stating that "a new form of school is necessary for poor children," and that parents who must send their little ones to school "should send them to nursery schools rather than to schools of instruction," to schools where there should be "more play, more sleep, more free conversation, story-telling and observation." It would seem that the recommendations of 1905 may begin to be carried out in 1919, a consummation devoutly to be wished.

In the meantime voluntary effort has done what it could. Birmingham had good reason to be in the forefront, since many of its public-spirited citizens had in their own childhood the benefit of the excellent work of Miss Caroline Bishop, a disciple of Frau Schrader. The Birmingham People's Kindergarten Association opened its first People's Kindergarten at Greet, in 1904, and a second, the Settlement Kindergarten, in 1907. Sir Oliver Lodge spoke strongly in favour of these institutions, calling them a protest against the idea of the comparative unimportance of childhood.

Miss Hardy opened her Child Garden in 1906, and that work has grown so that the children are now kept till they are eight years old. The Edinburgh Provincial Council for the Training of Teachers opened another Free Kindergarten as a demonstration school for Froebelian

methods, a practising school for students, and also as an experimental school, where attempts might be made to solve problems as to the education of neglected children under school age. It was the Headmistress of this school, Miss Hodsman, who invented the net beds now in general use. She wanted something hygienic and light enough to be carried easily into the garden, that in fine weather the children might sleep out of doors.

Another Sesame House student, Miss Priestman, opened a Free Kindergarten in the pretty village of Thornton-le-Dale, where the children have a sand-heap in a little enclosure allowed them by the blacksmith, and sail their boats at a quiet place by the side of the beck that runs through the village.

It was in 1908 that Miss Esther Lawrence of the Froebel Institute inspired her old students to help her to open The Michaelis Free Kindergarten. Since the war, the name has been altered to The Michaelis Nursery School, which is in Notting Dale, on the edge of a very poor neighbourhood, where large families often occupy a single room. As in the Edinburgh Free Kindergartens, dinner is provided, for which the parents pay one penny. The first report tells how necessary are Nursery Schools in such surroundings. "The little child who was formerly tied to the leg of the bed, and left all day while his mother was out at work, is now enjoying the happy freedom of the Kindergarten. The child whose clothes were formerly sewn on to him, to save his mother the periodical labour of sewing on buttons, is now undressed and bathed regularly. The attacks on children by drunken parents are less frequent. When the Kindergarten was first opened, many of the children were quite listless, they did not know how to play, did not care to play. Now they play with pleasure and with vigour, and one can hardly believe they are the listless, spiritless children of a year ago."

In 1910 Miss Lawrence succeeded in opening what was called from the first the "Somers Town Nursery School," where the same kind of work is done. One of the reports says: "It is interesting to see the children sweeping or dusting a room, washing their dusters and dolls' clothes, polishing the furniture, their shoes, and anything which needs polishing. On Friday morning the 'silver' is cleaned, and the brilliant results give great pleasure and satisfaction to the little polishers. 'Have you done your work?' was the question addressed to a visitor by a three-year-old child, and the visitor beat a hasty retreat, ashamed perhaps of being the only drone in the busy hive. At dinner time four children wait on the rest, and very well and quickly the food is handed round and the plates removed."

There are other Free Kindergartens at work. One is in charge of Miss Rowland, and is in connection with the Bermondsey Settlement. It is Miss Rowland who tells of the "candid mother" she met one Saturday who remarked, "I told the children to wash their faces in case they met you."

The Phoenix Park Kindergarten in Glasgow is interesting because the site was granted by an enlightened Corporation and the Parks Committee laid out the garden, while the real start came from the pupils of a school for girls of well-to-do families. By this time other social agencies have been grouped round the Kindergarten as a centre.

The Caldecott Nursery School was opened in 1911 and has grown into the Caldecott Community, which has now taken its children to live altogether in the country. This Nursery School was never intended to be a Kindergarten; it was started as an interesting experiment, "chiefly perhaps in the hope that the children might enjoy that instruction which is usually absorbed by the children of the wealthy in their own nurseries by virtue of their happier surroundings."

And in the very year in which we were plunged into war Miss Margaret M'Millan put into actual shape what she had long thought of, and opened her "Baby Camp" and Nursery School, with a place for "toddlers" in between, the full story of which is told in *The Camp School.* In the Camp itself the things which impress the visitor most are first the space and the fresh air, the sky above and the brown earth below, and next the family feeling which is so plain in spite of the numbers. The Camp existed long before it was a Baby Camp and Nursery School, for Miss M'Millan began with a School Clinic and went on to Open-Air Camps for girls and for boys, before going to the "preventive and constructive" work of the Baby Camp. Clean and healthy bodies come first, but to Miss M'Millan's enthusiasm everything in life is educative.

The war has increased the supply of Nursery Schools, because the need for them has become glaringly apparent. Many experiments are going on now, and it seems as if experimental work would be encouraged, not hampered by unyielding regulations. The Nursery School should cover the ages for which the Kindergarten was instituted, roughly from three to six years old. Already there are excellent baby rooms in some parts of London, and no doubt in other towns, and the only reason for disturbing these is to provide the children with more space and more fresh air, or with something resembling a garden rather than a bare yard.

One school in London has a crèche or day nursery, not exactly a part of it, but in closest touch, established owing to the efforts of an enthusiastic Headmistress working along with the Norland Place nurses. Its space is at present insufficient, but the neighbouring buildings are condemned, and will come down after the war. They need not go up again. Then the space could be used in the same way as in the Camp School. That would be to the benefit of the

whole neighbourhood, and there could be at least one experiment where from crèche to Standard VII. might be in close connection.

Miss M'Millan's ideal is to have a large space in the centre of a district with covered passages radiating from it so that mothers from a large area could bring their little ones and leave them in safety. It would be safety, it would be salvation. But, as the Scots proverb has it, "It is a far cry to Loch Awe."

Another question much debated is, who is to be in charge of these children. The day nursery or crèche must undoubtedly be staffed with nurses, but with nurses trained to care for children, not merely sick nurses. There are, however, certain people who believe that the "trained nurse" is the right person to be in charge of children up to five, while others think that young girls or uneducated women will suffice. We are thankful that the Board of Education takes up the position that a well-educated and specially trained teacher is to be the person responsible.

We certainly want the help both of the trained nurse and of the motherly woman. The trained nurse will be far more use in detecting and attending to the ailments of children than the teacher can be, and the motherly woman can give far more efficient help in training children to decent habits than any young probationer, useful though these may be. But there is always the fear that the nurses may think that good food and cleanliness are all a child requires, and, as Miss M'Millan says, "The sight of the toddlers' empty hands and mute lips does not trouble them at all."

But every man to his trade, and though the teacher in charge must know something about ailing children, it is very doubtful if a few months in a hospital will advantage her much. Here she trenches on the province of the real nurse, whose training is thorough, and the little

knowledge, as every one knows, is sometimes dangerous. One Nursery School teacher, with years of experience, says that what she learned in hospital has been of no use to her, and it is probable that attendance at a clinic for children would be really more useful. Certainly the main concern of the Nursery School teacher is sympathetic understanding of children. There must be no more of *Punch's* "Go and see what Tommy is doing in the next room and tell him not to," but "Go and see what Tommy is trying to accomplish, and make it possible for him to carry on his self-education through that 'fostering of the human instincts of activity, investigation and construction' which constitutes a Kindergarten."

CHAPTER V

"THE WORLD'S MINE OYSTER"

A box of counters and a red-veined stone,
A piece of glass abraded by the beach,
And six or seven shells.

If early education is to consist in fostering natural activities, there can be no doubt that Froebel hit upon the activity most prominent of all in the case of young children, viz. the impulse to investigate. For his crest, the little child should share in the motto given to the mongoose family, in Kipling's *Rikki-Tikki*, "Run and find out."

Most writers on the education of young children have emphasised the importance of what is most inadequately called sense training, and it is here that Dr. Montessori takes her stand with her "didactic apparatus." Froebel's ideas seem wider; he realises that the sword with which the child opens his oyster is a two-edged sword, that he uses not only his sense organs as tools for investigation, but his whole body. His pathway to knowledge, and to power over himself and his surroundings, is action, and action of all kinds is as necessary to him as the use of his senses.

"The child's first utterance is force," says Froebel, and his first discovery is the resistance of matter, when he "pushes with his feet against what resists them." His first experiments are with his body, "his first toys are his own limbs," and his first play is the use of "body, senses and limbs"

for the sake of use, not for result. One use of his body is the imitation of any moving object, and Froebel tells the mother:

If your child's to understand
Action in the world without,
You must let his tiny hand
Imitative move about.
This is the reason why
Baby will, never still,
Imitate whatever's by.

At this stage the child is "to move freely, and be active, to grasp and hold with his own hands." He is to stand "when he can sit erect and draw himself up," not to walk till he "can creep, rise freely, maintain his balance and proceed by his own effort." He is *not* to be hindered by swaddling bands—such as are in use in Continental countries—nor, later on, to be "*spoiled by too much assistance*," words which every mother and teacher should write upon her phylacteries. But as soon as he can move himself the surroundings speak to the child, "outer objects *invite* him to seize and grasp them, and if they are distant, they invite him who would bring them nearer to move towards them."

This use of the word "invite" is worthy of notice, and calls to mind a sentence used by a writer on Freud,[1] that "the activity of a human being is a constant function of his environment." We adults, who are so ready with our "Don't touch," must endeavour to remember how everything is shouting to a child: "Look at me, listen to me, come and fetch me, and find out all you can about me by every means in your power."

If we have anything to do with little children, we must face the fact that the child is, if not quite a Robinson Crusoe on his island, at least an explorer in a strange country, and a scientist in his laboratory. But there is nothing narrow in his outlook: the name of this chapter is deliberately chosen, the whole world is the child's oyster, his interests are all-embracing.

[1] *The Freudian Wish*, Edwin Holt.

From his first walk he is the geographer. "Each little walk is a tour of discovery; each object—the chair, the wall—is an America, a new world, which he either goes around to see if it be an island, or whose coast he follows to discover if it be a continent. Each new phenomenon is a discovery in the child's small and yet rich world, *e.g.* one may go round the chair; one may stand before it, behind it, but one cannot go behind the bench or the wall."

Then comes an inquiry into the physical properties of surrounding objects. "The effort to reach a particular object may have its source in the child's desire to hold himself firm and upright by it, but we also observe that it gives him pleasure to touch, to feel, to grasp, and perhaps also—which is a new phase of activity—to be able to move it. . . . The chair is hard or soft; the seat is smooth; the corner is pointed; the edge is sharp." The business of the adult, Froebel goes on to say, is to supply these names, "not primarily to develop the child's power of speech," but "to define his sense impressions."

Next, the scientist must stock his laboratory with material for experiment.

"The child is attracted by the bright round smooth pebble, by the gaily fluttering bit of paper, by the smooth bit of board, by the rectangular block, by the brilliant quaint leaf. Look at the child that can scarcely keep himself erect, that can walk only with the greatest care—he sees a twig, a bit of straw; painfully he secures it, and like the bird carries it to his nest. See him again, laboriously stooping and slowly going forward on the ground, under the eaves of the roof (the deep eaves of the Thuringian peasant house). The force of the rain has washed out of the sand smooth bright pebbles, and the ever-observing child gathers them as building stones as it were, as material for future building. And is he wrong? Is he not in truth collecting material for his future life building?"

The "box of counters, and the red-veined stone," the brilliant quaint leaf, the twig, the bit of straw, all the child's treasures—these are the stimuli which, according to the biologist educator, must be supplied if the activities appropriate to each stage are to be called forth. Every one knows for how long a period a child can occupy himself examining, comparing and experimenting.

"Like things," says Froebel, "must be ranged together, unlike things separated. . . . The child loves all things that enter his small horizon and extend his little world. To him the least thing is a new discovery, but it must not come dead into the little world, nor lie dead therein, lest it obscure the small horizon and crush the little world. Therefore the child would know why he loves this thing, he would know all its properties. For this reason he examines the object on all sides; for this reason he tears and breaks it; for this reason he puts it in his mouth and bites it. We reprove the child for naughtiness and foolishness; and yet he is wiser than we who reprove him."

This experimenting is one side of a child's play, and the things with which he thus experiments are his toys, or, as Froebel puts it, "play material." Much of this is and ought to be self found, and where the child can find his own toys he asks for little more. The seaside supplies him with sand and water, stones, shells, rock pools, seaweed, and he asks us for nothing but a spade, which digs deeper than his naked hands, and a pail to carry water, which hands alone cannot convey.

> The vista of the sand
> is the child's free land;
> where the grown-ups seem half afraid;
> even nurse forgets to sniff
> and to call "come here"
> as she sits very near
> to the far up cliff
> and you venture alone with your spade. . . .

Even indoors, a child could probably find for himself all the material for investigation, all the stimuli he requires, if it were not that his investigations interfere with adult purposes. Even in very primitive times the child probably experimented upon the revolving qualities of his mother's spindle till she found it more convenient to let him have one for himself, and it became a toy or top.

Froebel, who made so much of play, to whom it was spontaneous education and self realisation, was bound to see that toys were important. "The man advanced in insight," he said, "even when he gives his child a plaything, must make clear to himself its purpose and the purpose of playthings and occupation material in general. This purpose is to aid the child freely to express what lies within him, and to bring the outer world nearer to him, and thus to serve as mediator between the mind and the world." Froebel's "Gifts" were an attempt to supply right play material. True to his faith in natural impulse, Froebel watched children to see what playthings they found for themselves, or which, among those presented by adults, were most appreciated. Soft little coloured balls seemed right material for a baby's tender hand, and it was clear that when the child could crawl about he was ready for something which he could roll on the floor and pursue on all fours. As early as two years old he loves to take things out of boxes and to move objects about, so boxes of bricks were supplied, graded in number and in variety of form. Not for a moment did Froebel suggest that the child was to be limited to these selected playthings, he expressly stated the contrary, and he frequently said that spontaneity was not to be checked. But from what has followed, from the way in which these little toys have been misused, we are tempted to speculate on whether these "Gifts" supplied that definite foundation without which, in these days, no notice would have been taken of the new ideas, or whether

they have proved the sunken rock on which much that was valuable has perished. The world was not ready to believe in the educational value of play, just pure play. Nor is it yet. For the new system in its "didactic" apparatus out-Froebels Froebel in his mistake of trying to systematise the material for spontaneous education. Carefully planned, as were Froebel's own "gifts," the new apparatus presents a series of exercises in sense discrimination, satisfying no doubt while unfamiliar, but suffering from the defect of the "too finished and complex plaything," in which Froebel saw a danger "which slumbers like a viper under the roses." The danger is that "the child can begin no new thing with it, cannot produce enough variety by its means; his power of creative imagination, his power of giving outward form to his own ideas are thus actually deadened."

"To realise his aims, man, and more particularly the child, requires material, though it be only a bit of wood or a pebble, with which he makes something or which he makes into something. In order to lead the child to the handling of material we give him the ball, the cube and other bodies, the Kindergarten gifts. Each of these gifts incites the child to free spontaneous activity, to independent movement."

Froebel would have sympathised deeply with the views of Peter as expressed by Mr. Wells in regard to Ideals, which he, however, called toys:

"The theory of Ideals played almost as important a part in the early philosophy of Peter as it did in the philosophy of Plato. But Peter did not call them Ideals, he called them 'toys.' Toys were the simplified essences of things, pure, perfect and manageable. Real things were troublesome, uncontrollable, over-complicated and largely irrelevant. A Real Train, for example, was a poor, big, clumsy, limited thing that was obliged to go to Redhill, or Croydon, or London, that was full of unnecessary strangers, usually sitting firmly in the window seats, that

you could do nothing with at all. A Toy Train was your very own; it took you wherever you wanted, to Fairyland, or Russia, or anywhere, at whatever pace you chose."[1]

Froebel asks what presents are most prized by the child and by mankind in general, and answers, "Those which afford him a means of developing his mind, of giving it freest activity, of expressing it clearly." For her ideas as to educative material Dr. Montessori went, not to normal life, not even to children, but to what may be called curative appliances, to the material invented by Séguin to develop the dormant powers of defective children. She herself came to the study of education from the medical side, the curative. Froebel, with his belief in human instinct, naturally went to what he called the mother's room, which we should call the nursery, and to the garden where the child finds his "bright round smooth pebble" and his "brilliant quaint leaf." No one would seek to undervalue the importance of sense discrimination, but it can be exercised without formalism, and it need not be mere discrimination. It is in connection with the Taste and Smell games that Froebel tells the mother that "the higher is rooted in the lower, morality in instinct, the spiritual in the material." The baby enjoys the scent, thanks the kind spirit that put it there, and must let mother smell it too, so from the beginning there is a touch of aesthetic pleasure and a recognition of "what the dear God is saying outside." As to how sense discrimination may be exercised without formality, there is a charming picture in *The Camp School*:

"And then that sense of *Smell*, which got so little exercise and attention that it went to sleep altogether, so that millions get no warning and no joy through it. We met the need for its education in the Baby Camp by having a Herb Garden. Back from the shelters and open ground, in a shady place, we have planted fennel, mint, lavender,

[1] *Joan and Peter*, p. 77.

sage, marjoram, thyme, rosemary, herb gerrard and rue. And over and above these pungently smelling things there are little fields of mignonette. We have balm, indeed, everywhere in our garden. The toddlers go round the beds of herbs, pinching the leaves with their tiny fingers and then putting their fingers to their noses. There are two little couples going the rounds just now. One is a pair of new comers, very much astonished, the other couple old inhabitants, delighted to show the wonders of the place! Coming back with odorous hands, they perhaps want to tell us about the journey. Their eyes are bright, their mouths open."

In Chapter II. we quoted the biologist educator's ideal conception of the surroundings best suited to bring about right development. Let us now visit one or two actual Kindergartens and see if these conditions are in any way realised by the followers of Froebel.

The first one we enter is certainly a large bright room, for one side is open to light, with two large windows, and between them glass doors opening into the playground. There is no heap of sand in a corner, nor is there a tub of water; for the practical teacher knows how little hands, if not little feet, with their vigorous but as yet uncontrolled movements would splash the water and scatter the sand with dire effects as to the floor, which the theorist fondly imagines would always be clean enough to sit upon. But there is a sand-tray big enough and deep enough for six to eight children to use individually or together. As spontaneous activity, with its ceaseless efforts at experimenting, ceaselessly spills the sand, within easy reach are little brushes and dustpans to remedy such mishaps. The sand-tray is lined with zinc so that the sand can be replaced by water for boats and ducks, etc., when desired.

The low wall blackboard is there ready for use. Bright pictures are on the walls, well drawn and well coloured,

some from nursery rhymes, some of Caldecott's, a frieze of hen and chickens, etc. Boxes for houses and shops are not in evidence, but their place is taken by bricks of such size and quantity that houses, shops, motors, engines and anything else may be built large enough for the children themselves to be shopkeepers or drivers, and there are also pieces of wood to use for various purposes of construction. There is no cooking stove, but simple cooking can be carried out on an open fire, and when a baking oven is required, an eager procession makes its way to the kitchen, where a kindly housekeeper permits the use of her oven. There is a doll's cot with a few dolls of various sizes. There are flowers and growing bulbs. There are light low tables and chairs, a family of guinea pigs in a large cage, and there is a cupboard which the children can reach.

Water is to be found in a passage room, between the Kindergarten and the rooms for children above that stage, and here, so placed that the children themselves can find and reach everything, are the sawdust, bran and oats for the guinea pigs, with a few carrots and a knife to cut them, some tiny scrubbing-brushes and a wiping-up cloth. Here also are stored the empty boxes, corrugated paper and odds and ends in constant demand for constructions.

In the cupboard there are certain shelves from which anything may be taken, and some from which nothing may be taken without leave. For the teacher here is of opinion that children of even three and four are not too young to begin to learn the lesson of *meum* and *tuum*, and she also thinks it is good to have some treasures which do not come out every day, and which may require more delicate handling than the ordinary toy ought to need. For this ought to be strong enough to bear unskilled handling and vigorous movements, for a broken toy ought to be a tragedy. At the same time it is part of a child's training to learn to use dainty objects with delicate handling, and such things

form the children's art gems, showing beauty of construction and of colour. Children as well as grown-ups have their bad days, when something out of the usual is very welcome. "Do you know there's nothing in this world that I'm not tired of?" was said one day by a boy of six usually quite contented. "Give me something out of the cupboard that I've never seen before," said another whose digestion was troublesome. The open shelves contain pencils and paper, crayons, paint-boxes, boxes of building blocks, interlocking blocks, wooden animals, jigsaw and other puzzles, coloured tablets for pattern laying, toy scales, beads to thread, dominoes, etc., the only rule being that what is taken out must be tidily replaced. This Kindergarten is part of a large institution, and the playground, to which it has direct access, is of considerable extent. There is a big stretch of grass and another of asphalt, so that in suitable weather the tables and chairs, the sand-tray, the bricks and anything else that is wanted can be carried outside so that the children can live in the open, which of course is better than any room. In the playground there is a bank where the children can run up and down, and there are a few planks and a builder's trestle,[1] on which they can be poised for seesaws or slides, and these are a constant source of pleasure.

In another Kindergarten we find the walls enlivened with Cecil Aldin's fascinating friezes: here is Noah with all the animals walking in cheerful procession, and in the next room is an attractive procession of children with push-carts, hoops and toy motor cars. When we make our visit the day is fine and the room is empty, the children are all outside. The garden is not large, but there is some space, and under the shade of two big trees we find rugs spread, on which the children are sitting, standing, kneeling and lying, according to their occupation. One is building with large

[1] See p. 55.

blocks, and must stand up to complete her erection; another is lying flat putting together a jigsaw; another, a boy, is threading beads; while another has built railway arches, and with much whistling and the greatest carefulness is guiding his train through the tunnels. The play is almost entirely individual, but very often you hear, "O Miss X, *do* come and see what I've done!" After about an hour, during which a few of the children have changed their occupations, those who wish to do so join some older children who are playing games involving movement. This may be a traditional game like Looby Loo, or Round and round the Village, or it may be one of the best of the old Kindergarten games. After lunch the washing up is to be done in a beautiful new white sink which is displayed with pride.

Our next visit is to a Free Kindergarten. The rooms are quite as attractive, as rich in charming friezes as in the others, and the furnishing in some ways is much the same. But here we see what we have not seen before, for here is a large room filled with tiny hammock beds. The windows are wide open, but the blinds are down, for the children are having their afternoon sleep.

Here, as in all Free Kindergartens, the children are provided with simple but pretty overalls which the parents are pleased to wash. House shoes are also provided, partly to minimise the noise from active little feet, but principally because the poor little boots are often a painfully inadequate protection from wet pavements. The children are trained to tidy ways and to independence. They cannot read, but by picture cards they recognise their own beds, pegs and other properties. They take out and put away their own things, and give all reasonable help in laying tables and serving food, in washing, dusting and sweeping up crumbs, as is done in any true Kindergarten.

In the garden of this Free Kindergarten there is a large

sand-pit, surrounded by a low wooden framework, and having a pole across the middle so that it resembles a cucumber frame and a cover can be thrown over the sand to keep it clean when not in use.

Froebel's own list of playthings contains, besides balls and building blocks, coloured beads, coloured tablets for laying patterns, coloured papers for cutting, folding and plaiting; pencils, paints and brushes; modelling clay and sand; coloured wool for sewing patterns and pictures; and such little sticks and laths as children living in a forest region find for themselves. Considered in themselves, apart from the traditions of formality, these are quite good play material or stimuli, and Froebel meant the time to come "when we shall speak of the doll and the hobby horse as the first plays of the awakening life of the girl and the boy," but he died before he had done so. In the *Mother Songs*, too, we find quite a good list of toys which are now to be found in most Kindergartens.

Toys for the playground should be provided—a sand-heap, a seesaw, a substantial wheel-barrow, hoops, balls, reins and perhaps skipping-ropes. Something on which the child can balance, logs or planks which they can move about, and a trestle on which these can be supported, are invaluable. It was while an addition was being made to our place that we realised the importance of such things, and, as in Froebel's case, "our teachers were the children themselves." They were so supremely happy running up and down the plank roads laid by the builders for their wheel-barrows, seesawing or balancing and sliding on others, that we could not face the desolation of emptiness which would come when the workmen removed their things. So, for a few pounds, all that the children needed was secured, ordinary planks for seesawing, narrower for balancing and a couple of trestles. One exercise the children had specially enjoyed was jumping up and down on yielding

planks, and this the workmen had forbidden because the planks might crack. But a sympathetic foreman told us what was needed: two planks of special springy wood were fastened together by cross pieces at each end, and besides making excellent slides, these made most exciting spring-boards.

For representations of real life the children require dolls and the simplest of furniture—a bed, which need only be a box, some means of carrying out the doll's washing, her personal requirements as well as her clothes; some little tea-things and pots and pans. A doll's house is not necessary, and can only be used by two or three children, but will be welcomed if provided, and its appointments give practice in dainty handling. Trains and signals of some kind, home-made or otherwise; animals for farm or Zoo; a pair of scales for a shop, and some sort of delivery van, which, of course, may be home-made.

There must also be provision for increase of skill and possibility of creation. If the Kindergarten can afford it, some of the Montessori material may be provided; there is no reason, except expense, why it should not be used if the children like it, and if it does not take up too much room. But it has no creative possibilities, and even at three years old this is required. Scissors are an important tool, and an old book of sample wall-papers is most useful; old match-boxes and used matches, paste and brushes and some old magazines to cut. Blackboard chalks and crayons, paint-boxes with four to six important colours, some Kindergarten folding papers, all these supply colour. Certain toys seem specially suited to give hand control, *e.g.* a Noah's Ark, where the small animals are to be set out carefully, tops or teetotums and tiddlywinks, at which some little children become proficient. The puzzle interest must not be forgotten, and simple jigsaw pictures give great pleasure. It is interesting to note here that the youngest

children fit these puzzles not by the picture but by form, though they know they are making a picture and are pleased when it is finished. The puzzle with six pictures on the sides of cubes is much more difficult than a simple jigsaw.

All sorts of odds and ends come in useful, and especially for the poorer children these should be provided. Any one who remembers the pleasure derived from coloured envelope bands, from transparent paper from crackers, and from certain advertisements, will save these for children to whose homes such treasures never come. A box containing scraps of soft cloth, possibly a bit of velvet, some bits of smooth and shining coloured silk give the pleasure of sense discrimination without the formality of the Montessori graded boxes, and are easier to replace. Some substitute for "mother's button box," a box of shells or coloured seeds, a box of feathers, all these things will be played with, which means observation and discrimination, comparison and contrast, and in addition, where colour is involved, there is aesthetic pleasure, and this also enters into the touching of smooth or soft surfaces. Softness is a joy to children, as is shown in the woolly lambs, etc., provided for babies. A little one of my acquaintance had a bit of blanket which comforted many woes, and when once I offered her a feather boa as a substitute she sobbed out: "It isn't so soft as the blanket!"

In one of Miss M'Millan's early books she wrote: "Very early the child begins more or less consciously to exercise the basal sense—the sense of touch. On waking from sleep he puts his tiny hands to grasp something, or turns his head on the firm soft pillow. He *touches* rather than looks, at first (for his hands and fingers perform a great many movements long before he learns to turn his eye-balls in various directions or follow the passage even of a light), and through touching many things he begins his

education. If he is the nursling of wealthy parents, it is possible that his first exercises are rather restricted. He touches silk, ivory, muslin and fine linen. That is all, and that is not much. But the child of the cottager is often better off, for his mother gives him a great variety of objects to keep him quiet. The ridiculous command, 'Do not touch,' cannot be imposed on him while he is screaming in his cradle or protesting in his dinner chair; and so all manner of things—reels, rings, boxes, tins, that is to say a variety of surfaces—is offered to him, to his great delight and advantage. And lest he should not get the full benefit of such privilege he carries everything to his mouth, where the sense of touch is very keen." [1]

Among the treasures kept for special occasions there may be pipes for soap-bubbles, a prism of some kind with which to make rainbows, a tiny mirror to make "light-birds" on the wall and ceiling, and a magnet with the time-honoured ducks and fish, if these are still to be bought, along with other articles, delicately made or coloured, which require care.

Pictures and picture-books should also be considered; some being in constant use, some only brought out occasionally. For the very smallest children some may be rag books, but always children should be taught to treat books carefully. The pictures on the walls ought to be changed, sometimes with the children's help, sometimes as a surprise and discovery. For that purpose it is convenient to have series of pictures in frames with movable backs, but brown-paper frames will do quite well. The pictures belonging to the stories which have been told to the children ought to have a prominent place, and if the little ones desire to have one retold they will ask for it.

It is of course not at all either necessary or even desirable for any one school to have everything, and children

[1] *Early Childhood*: Swan Sonnenschein, published 1900.

should not have too much within the range of their attention at one time. Individual teachers will make their own selections, but in all cases there must be sufficient variety of material for each child to carry out his natural desire for observation, experiment and construction.

CHAPTER VI

"ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE"

A wedding or a festival, a mourning or a funeral . . .
As if his whole vocation were endless imitation.

In every country and in every age those who have eyes to see have watched the same little dramas. What Wordsworth saw was seen nineteen hundred years ago in the Syrian market-place, where the children complained of their unresponsive companions: "We have piped the glad chaunt of the marriage, but ye have not danced, we have wailed our lamentation, but ye have not joined our mourning procession."

Since the very name Kindergarten is to imply a teaching which fulfils the child's own wants and desires, it must supply abundant provision for the dramatic representation of life. Adults have always been ready to use for their own purposes the strong tendency to imitate, which is a characteristic of all normal children, but few even now realise to what extent a child profits by his imitative play. The explanation that Froebel found for this will now be generally accepted, viz. that only by acting it out can a child fully grasp an idea, "For what he tries to represent or do, he begins to understand." He thinks in action, or as one writer put it, he "apperceives with his muscles." This explanation seems to cover imitative play, from the little child's imitative wave of the hand up to such elaborate imitations as are described in Stanley Hall's *Story of a Sand*

Pile,[1] or in Dewey's *Schools of To-morrow*. But when we think of the joy of such imaginative play as that of Red Indians, shipwrecks and desert islands, we feel that these show a craving for experience, for life, such a craving as causes the adult to lose himself in a book of travels or in a dramatic performance, and which explains the phenomenal success of the cinema, poor stuff as it is.

We thirst for experiences, even for those which are unpleasant; we wonder "how it feels" to be up in an aeroplane or down in a submarine. We are far indeed from desiring air-raids, but if such things must be, there is a curious satisfaction in being "in it." And though the experiences they desire may be matters of everyday occurrence to us, children probably feel the craving even more keenly. "You may write what you like," said a teacher, and a somewhat inarticulate child wrote, "I was out last night, it was late." "Why, Jack," said another, "you've painted your cow green; did you ever see a green cow?" "No," said Jack, "but I'd like to."

In early Kindergarten days this imitative and dramatic tendency was chiefly met in games, and the children were by turns butterflies and bees, bakers and carpenters, clocks and windmills. The programme was suggested by Froebel's *Mother Songs*, in which he deals with the child's nearest environment. Too often, indeed, the realities to which Froebel referred were not realities to English children, but that was recognised as a defect, and the ideas themselves were suitable. Chickens, pigeons and farmyard animals; the homely pussy cat or canary bird; the workers to whom the child is indebted, farmer, baker, miner, builder or carpenter; the sun, the rain, the rainbow and the "light-bird"—such ideas were chosen as suitable centres, and stories and songs, games and handwork clustered round.

What was the reason for this binding of things together?

[1] Or that delightful "Play Town" in *The Play Way*.

Why did Froebel constantly plead for "unity" even for the tiny child, and tell us to link together his baby finger-games or his first weak efforts at building with his blocks chairs, tables, beds, walls and ladders?

Looking back over the years, it seems as if this idea of joining together has been trying to assert itself under various forms, each of which has reigned for its day, has been carried to extremes and been discarded, only to come up again in a somewhat different form. It has always seemed to aim at extending and ordering the mind content of children. For the Froebelian it was expressed in such words as "unity," "connectedness" and "continuity," while the Herbartians called it "correlation." Under these terms much work has been, and is still being, carried out, some very good and some very foolish. Ideas catch on, however, because of the truth that is in them, not because of the error which is likely to be mixed with it, and even the weakest effort after connection embodies an important truth. When we smile over absurd stories of forced "correlation," we seldom stop to think of what went on before the Kindergarten existed, for instance the still more absurd and totally disconnected lists of object lessons. One actual list for children of four years old ran: Soda, Elephant, Tea, Pig, Wax, Cow, Sugar, Spider, Potatoes, Sheep, Salt, Mouse, Bread, Camel.

Kindergarten practice was far ahead of this, for here the teacher was expected to choose her material according to (1) Time of Year; (2) Local Conditions, such as the pursuits of the people; (3) Social Customs. When it was possible the children went to see the real blacksmith or the real cow, and to let game or handwork be an expression, and a re-ordering of ideas gained was natural and right. Connectedness, however, meant more than this, it meant that the material itself was to be treated so that the children would be helped to that real understanding which comes

from seeing things in their relations to each other. As Lloyd Morgan puts it, "We are mainly at work upon the mental background. It is our object to make this background as rich and full and orderly as possible, so that whatever is brought to the focus of consciousness shall be set in a relational background, which shall give it meaning; and so that our pupils may be able to feel the truth which Browning puts into the mouth of Fra Lippo Lippi:

> This world's no blot for us
> Nor blank; it means intensely and means good:
> To find its meaning is my meat and drink."

According to Professor Dewey, some such linking or joining is necessary "to foster that sense which is at the basis of attention and of all intellectual growth, the sense of continuity." The Herbartian correlation was designed to further that well-connected circle of thought out of which would come the firm will, guided by right insight, inspired by true feeling, which is their aim in education.

Froebelian unity and connectedness have, like the others, an intellectual and a moral aspect. Intellectually "the essential characteristic of instruction is the treatment of individual things in their relationships"; morally, the idea of unity is that we are all members one of another. The child who, through unhindered activity, has reached the stage of self-consciousness is to go on to feel himself a part, a member of an ever-increasing whole—family, school, township, country, humanity—the All; to be "one with Nature, man and God."

Every one has heard something of the new teaching—which, by the way, sheds clearer light over Froebel's warning against arbitrary interference—viz. that a great part of the nervous instability which affects our generation is due to the thwarting and checking of the natural impulses of early years. But this new school also gives us something positive, and reinforces older doctrines by telling us to integrate behaviour. "This matter of the unthwarted

lifelong progress of behaviour integration is of profound importance, for it is the transition from behaviour to conduct. The more integrated behaviour is harmonious and consistent behaviour toward a larger and more comprehensive situation, toward a bigger section of the universe; it is lucidity and breadth of purpose. The child playing with fire is only wrong conduct because it is behaviour that does not take into account consequences; it is not adjusted to enough of the environment; it will be made right by an enlargement of its scope and reach."[1]

All selfish conduct, all rudeness and roughness come from ignorance; we are all more or less self-centred, and the child's consciousness of self has to be widened, his scope has to be enlarged to sympathy with the thoughts, feelings and desires of other selves. "The sane man is the man who (however limited the scope of his behaviour) has no such suppression incorporated in him. The wise man must be sane and must have scope as well."[1]

Professor Earl Barnes always used to describe the child mind as "scrappy." How can we best aid development into the wholeness or healthiness and the scope of sanity and wisdom? For it may well be that this widening and ordering of experience, of consciousness, of behaviour into moral behaviour is our most important task as teachers. Froebel emphasised the "crying need" for connection of school and life, pointing out how the little child desires to imitate and the older to share in all that, as Professor Dewey puts it, is "surcharged with a sense of the mysterious values that attach to whatever their elders are concerned with." This is one of the points to which Professor Dewey called attention in his summing up of Froebel's educational principles, this letting the child reproduce on his own plane the typical doings and occupations of the larger, maturer society into which he is finally to go forth.

[1] *The Freudian Wish*, Edwin Holt.

It is in this connection that he says the Kindergarten teacher has the opportunity to foster that most important "sense of continuity." In simple reproduction of the home life while there is abundant variety, since daily life may bring us into contact with all the life of the city or of the country, yet, because the work is within a whole, "there is opportunity to foster that sense which is at the basis of attention and of all intellectual growth, a sense of continuity."

Since Professor Dewey gave to the world the results of his experimental school, all the Kindergartens and most of the Infant Schools in England have tried to carry out their accustomed reproduction of home surroundings, more or less on the lines of the Primary Department of his experimental school. They have extended their scope, and in addition to the material already taken from workman and shop, from garden and farm, have also with much profit to older children used his suggestions about primitive industries.

Reproduction of home surroundings can be done in many ways, one of which is to help the children to furnish and to play with a doll's house. But the play must be play. It is not enough to use the drama as merely offering suggestions for handwork, and one small doll's house does not allow of real play for more than one or two children.

Our own children used to settle this by taking out the furniture, etc., and arranging different homes around the room. I can remember the never-ending pleasure given by similar play in my own nursery days, when the actors were the men and boys supplied by tailors' advertisements. Many and varied were the experiences of these paper families, families, it may be noted, none of whom demeaned themselves so far as to possess any womankind. For that nursery party of five had lost its mother sadly early and was ruled by two boys, who evidently thought little of the other sex.

Professor Dewey tells us that "nothing is more absurd than to suppose that there is no middle term between leaving a child to his unguided fancies, or controlling his activities by a formal succession of dictated directions." It is the teacher's business to know what is striving for utterance and to supply the needed stimulus and materials.

To show how under the inspiration of a thoroughly capable teacher this continuity may be secured and prolonged for quite a long period, an example may be taken from the work of Miss Janet Payne, who is remarkably successful in meeting and stimulating, without in any way forcing the "striving for utterance" mentioned by Dewey. On this occasion Miss Payne produced a doll about ten inches high, dressed to resemble the children's fathers, and suggested that a home should be made for him. The children adopted him with zeal, named him Mr. Bird, and his career lasted for two years.

Mr. Bird required a family, so Mrs. Bird had to be produced with her little girl Winnie, and later a baby was added to the family. Beds, tables and chairs, including a high chair for Winnie, were made of scraps from the wood box, and for a long time Mr. Bird was most domesticated. Miss Payne had used ordinary dolls' heads, but had constructed the bodies herself in such a way that the dolls could sit and stand, and use their arms to wield a broom or hold the baby. After some time, one child said, "Mr. Bird ought to go to business," and after much deliberation he became a grocer. His shop was made and stocked, and he attended it every day, going home to dinner regularly. One day he appeared to be having a meal on the shop counter, and it was explained that he had been "rather in a hurry" in the morning, so Mrs. Bird had given him his breakfast to take with him. The Bird family had various adventures, they had spring cleanings, removals, visited the Zoo and went to the seaside. One morning a little fellow

sat in a trolley with the Bird family beside him for three-quarters of an hour evidently "imagining." I did inquire in passing if it was a drive or a picnic, but the answer was so brief, that I knew I was an interruption and retired. But a younger and bolder inquirer, who wanted to conduct an experiment in modelling, ventured to ask if Mr. Bird wanted anything that could be made "at clay modelling." "Yes, he wants some ink-pots for his post-office shop," was the answer, with the slightly irate addition, "but I *wish* you'd call it the china factory."

When these children moved to an upper class, Mr. Bird was laid away, but the children requested his presence. So he entered the new room and became a farmer. He had now to write letters, to arrange rents, etc., and the money had to be made and counted. The letters served for writing and reading lessons, and Miss Payne was careful to send the answers through the real post, properly addressed to Mr. Bird with the name of class and school. Mr. Bird hired labourers—the children,—grew corn, and thrashed it and sent it to the mill. A miller had to be produced, and the children, now his assistants, ground the wheat, and Mr. Bird came in his cart to fetch the sacks of flour, which ultimately became the Birds' Christmas pudding and was eaten by the labourers, now guests at the feast. In spring, after careful provision for their comfort, Mr. Bird went to the cattle market and bought cows. Though the milking had to be pretence, the butter and cheese were really made.

The first question of the summer term was, "What's Mr. Bird going to do this term?" Like other teachers inspired by Professor Dewey, we have found our children most responsive to the suggestion of playing out primitive man. But with some, not of course with the brightest, it is too great a stretch to go at one step from the present to the most primitive times, and we often spend a term over

something of the nature of Robinson Crusoe, where the situation presents characters accustomed to modern civilisation and deprived of all its conveniences. Miss Payne is careful to give the children full opportunity for suggestions —one dull little boy puzzled his mother by telling her "I made a very good 'gestion' to-day"—so though she had not contemplated the renewed appearance of Mr. Bird she said, "What do you want him to do?" "Let him go out and shoot bears," cried an embryo sportsman. Somewhat taken aback, Miss Payne temporised with, "He wouldn't find them in this country." "Then let him go to India," cried one child, but another called out, "No, no, let him go to a desert island!" and that was carried with acclamation. Mr. Bird's various homes were on a miniature scale, and were contained in a series of zinc trays, which we have had made to fit the available tables and cupboard tops. We find these trays convenient, as a new one can be added when more scope is required to carry out new ideas.

The following accounts taken from the notes of Miss Hilda Beer, while a student in training, show another kind of play where the children themselves act the drama. The notes only cover a short period, but they show how the play may arise quite incidentally.

Mon., June 18.—As the ground is too damp for out-of-doors work, if the children were not ready with plans, I meant to suggest building a railway station, tunnel, etc., and later, I thought perhaps we might paint advertisements of seaside resorts for our station.

But the children brought several things with them, and Dorothy brought her own doll. Marie had left the baby doll from the other room in the cot, so Dorothy and Sylvia said they must look after the babies. So Cecil, Josie and I swept and dusted.

Then we began to play house. Cecil and Dorothy were Mr. and Mrs. Harry, Sylvia was Mrs. Loo (husband at the

war). Josie was Nurse and I was Aunt Lizzie. The dolls were Winnie Harry, and Jack and Doreen Loo. Mr. and Mrs. Harry built themselves a house and so did we. Cecil said, "But what is the name of the road?" Mrs. Harry chose 25 Brookfield Avenue, and Mr. Harry 7 Victoria Street, but he gave in and Mrs. Loo took his name for her house. We had to put numbers on the houses; Sylvia could make 7, but the others could not make 25, so I put it on the board and they copied it. Josie having also made a 7 wanted to use it, but Mrs. Loo objected, and said, "The mother is more important than the nurse," so Josie fixed her 7 on the house opposite.

After lunch we bathed the babies and put them to sleep, and as it was time for the children's own rest, we all went to bed. When rest was over, we washed and dressed, and then Mrs. Harry asked for clay to make a water-tap for her house. That made all the children want to make things in clay, so we made cups and saucers, plates, and a baby's bottle, then scones and sponge-cakes, bread and a bread-board, and one of the children said we must put a B on that.

Then Mrs. Loo said, "But we haven't any shelves." I had to leave my class in Miss Payne's charge, and they spent the rest of the time fitting in shelves, water-taps, and sinks.

June 19.—After sweeping, dusting, and washing and dressing the dolls, I read to the children "How the House was built." Then we all pretended to bake, making rolls and cakes as next day was to be the doll Winnie's birthday. We baked our cakes on a piece of wood on the empty fire-place.

The other children were invited to Winnie's party, so we went out to shop. The children wanted lettuces from their own garden, but the grass was too wet, so we pretended. The shop was on the edge of the grass and we

talked to imaginary shopmen, Cecil often exclaiming, "Eightpence! why, it's not worth it!"

As neither of the houses would hold all the guests invited to the party, we had to have a picnic instead.

June 20.—I must see that Sylvia and Dorothy do the sweeping to-morrow, and let Josie bath the doll; she is very good-natured, and I see that they give her the less attractive occupation. I think too that the food question has played too large a part, so if the children suggest more cooking I shall look in the larder and say that really we must not buy or bake as food goes bad in hot weather, and we must not waste in war time.

The children have suggested making cushions, painting pictures, and making knives and forks, but we have not had time.

Report.—Dorothy and Sylvia swept, Cecil mended the wall of the house, Josie took the children down to the beach (the sand tray), and I dusted. We looked into the larder and found that yesterday's greens were going bad, so decided not to buy more. Then we took the babies for a walk. We noticed how many nasturtiums were out, how the blackberry bushes were in flower and in bud, and the runner-bean was in flower, and the red flowers looked so pretty in the green leaves. We looked at the hollyhocks, because I have told the children that they will grow taller than I am, and they are always wondering how soon this will be. The children found some cherries which had fallen, and Dorothy said how pretty they were on the tree. I called attention to one branch that was laden with fruit, and looked particularly pretty with the sun shining on it. We also looked at the pear tree and the almond. Everything has come on so fast, and the children were ready to say it was because of the rain.

After rest, we went to the Hall to see the chickens. To-day they were much bigger, and Sylvia said had "bigger

wings." We were able to watch them drinking, how they hold up their heads to let the water run down. The rest of the morning we made curtains, and the children loved it. There was much discussion and at first the children suggested making them all different, but they agreed that curtains at windows were usually alike. Mr. and Mrs. Harry nearly quarrelled, as one wanted green and the other pink. I suggested trimming the green with a strip of pink, and they were quite pleased. Mrs. Loo and Nurse chose green which was to be sewn with red silk. Sylvia said, "A pattern," and I said, "You saw something red and green to-day," and she called out, "Oh! cherries." She cut out a round of paper and tried to sew round it, holding it in place with her other hand. I suggested putting in a stitch to hold the paper. Cecil was absorbed in sewing, and it seemed quieting for such an excitable boy and good for his weak hands. One child said, "Fancy a boy sewing," so I told how soldiers and sailors sewed. They sewed just as they liked.

These notes are continued in Chapter IX., where they are used to show children's attitude towards Nature. Though separated here for a special purpose it is clear that there neither is nor ought to be any real separation in the lives of the children. Their lives are wholes and they continually pass from one "subject" to another, because life and its circumstances are making new demands. If it rains and you cannot gather the lettuces you have grown from seed, you take refuge in happy pretence; if it clears and the sun calls you out of doors, you take your doll-babies for their walk.

CHAPTER VII

JOY IN MAKING

I, too, will something make, and joy in the making.
ROBERT BRIDGES.

Built by that only Law, that Use be suggester of Beauty.
ARTHUR CLOUGH.

THERE has always been *making* in the Kindergarten, since to Froebel the impulse to create was a characteristic of self-conscious humanity. Stopford Brooke points out that Browning's Caliban, though almost brute, shows himself human, in that, besides thinking out his natural religion, he also dramatises and creates, "falls to make something."

'Tis solace making baubles, ay, and sport.
Tasteth, himself, no finer good i' the world
Than trying what to do with wit and strength—

What does a child gain from his ceaseless attempts at making? Froebel's answer was that intellectually, through making he gains ideas, which, received in words, remain mere words. "To learn through life and action is more developing than to learn through words: expression in plastic material, united with thought and speech, is far more developing than mere repetition of words." Morally, it is through impressing himself on his surroundings, that the child reaches the human attributes of self-consciousness and self-control. One of the most important passages Froebel ever wrote is this:

"The deepest craving of the child's life is to see itself mirrored in some external object. Through such reflection, he learns to know his own activity, its essence, direction and aim, and learns to determine his activity in accordance with outer things. Such mirroring of the inner life is essential, for through it the child comes to self-consciousness, and learns to order, determine and master himself."

It is from the point of view of expression alone that Froebel regards Art, and drawing, he takes to be "the first revelation of the creative power within the child." The very earliest drawing to which he refers is what he calls "sketching the object on itself," that is, the tracing round the outlines of things, whereby the child learns form by co-ordinating sight and motor perceptions, a stage on which Dr. Montessori has also laid much stress. Besides noting how children draw "round scissors and boxes, leaves and twigs, their own hands, and even shadows," he sees that from experimentation with any pointed stick or scrap of red stone or chalk, may come what Mr. E. Cooke called a language of line, and now "the horse of lines, the man of lines" will give much pleasure. After this it is true that "whatever a child knows he will put into his drawing," and the teacher's business is to see that he has abundant perceptions and images to express.

Another kind of drawing which children seem to find for themselves is what they call making patterns. Out of this came the old-fashioned chequer drawing, now condemned as injurious to eyesight and of little value.

When children see anything rich in colour the general cry is "Let's paint it," which is their way of taking in the beauty. We should not, says Froebel, give them paints and brushes inconsiderately, to throw about, but give them the help they need, and he describes quite a sensible lesson given to boys "whose own painting did not seem to paint them long."

Teachers who want real help in the art training of children should read the excellent papers by Miss Findlay in *School and Life*, where we are told that we must rescue the term "design" from the limited uses to which it is often condemned in the drawing class, viz. the construction of pleasing arrangements of colour and form for surface decoration. "We shall use it in its full popular significance in constructive work. . . . The term will cover building houses, making kettles, laying out streets, planning rooms, dressing hair, as well as making patterns for cushion covers and cathedral windows. . . . In thus widening our art studies, we shall be harking back in a slight degree to the kind of training that in past ages produced the great masters. . . . Giotto designed his Campanile primarily for the bells that were to summon the Florentines to their cathedral; the Venetians wanted façades for their palaces, and made façades to delight their eyes; the Japanese have wanted small furniture for their small rooms, and have developed wonderful skill and taste in designing it. Neither art nor science can remain long afloat in high abstract regions above the needs and interests of human life. To quote A. H. Clough:

> 'A Cathedral Pure and Perfect.
> Built by that only Law, that Use be suggester of Beauty;
> Nothing concealed that is done, but all things done to adornment;
> Meanest utilities seized as occasions to grace and embellish.'"

If this is true of the interests of the professional artist, much more must it be true of the art training of the child. We must not then despise the rough and ready productions of a child, nor force upon him a standard for which he is not ready.

Before any other construction is possible to him, a child can *make* with sand, and this is a constant joy, from the endless puddings that are turned out of patty pans, up

to such models as that of the whole "Isle of Wight" with its tunnelled cliffs and system of railways, made by an ex-Kindergarten boy as yet innocent of geography lessons.

The child then who is making, especially making for use, is to a certain extent developing himself as an artist.

The little boys at Keilhau were well provided with sand, moss, etc., to use with their building blocks, and it was a former Keilhau boy who suggested to his old master that some kind of sand-box would make a good plaything for the children in his new Kindergarten. Miss Wiggin tells us that indirectly we owe the children's sand-heaps in the public parks to Froebel, since these were the result of a suggestion made by Frau Schrader to the Empress Frederick, and the idea was carried out during her husband's too brief reign.

Another very early "making" is the arranging of furniture for shops, carriages, trains, and the "ships upon the stairs," which made bright pictures in Stevenson's memory.

Building blocks are truly, as Froebel puts it, "the finest and most variable material that can be offered a boy for purposes of representation." The little boxes associated with the Kindergarten were originally planned for the use of nursery children two to three years of age, and in most if not in all Kindergartens these have been replaced by larger bricks. It is many years now since, at Miss Payne's suggestion, we bought some hundreds of road paving blocks, and these are such a source of pleasure that the children often dream about them. Living out the life around presents much opportunity for making, which may be done with blocks, but which even in the Kindergarten can be done with tools. Care must be exercised, but children have quite a strong instinct for self-preservation, and if shown how real workmen handle

their tools, they are often more careful than at a much later stage. To make a workable railway signal is more interesting and much more educative than to use one that came from a shop. The teacher may make illuminating discoveries in the process, as when one set of children desired to make a counter for a shop, and arranged their piece of wood vertically so that the counter had no top. It was found that to these very little people the most important part was the high front against which they were accustomed to stand, not the flat top which they seldom saw. Another set of children made a cart on which the farmer was to carry his corn, and exemplified Dewey's "concrete logic of action." At first they only wanted a board on wheels, but the corn fell off, so they nailed on sides, but the cart never had either back or front and resembled some seen in Early English pictures.

Any kind of cooking that can be done is a most important kind of making; even the very little ones can help, and they thoroughly enjoy watching. "Her hands were in the dough from three years old," said a north-country mother, "so I taught her how to bake, and now (at seven) she can bake as well as I can."

Children delight in carrying out the processes involved in the making of flour, and they can easily thrash a little wheat, then winnow, grind between stones and sift it. Their best efforts produce but a tiny quantity of flour, but the experience is real, interest is great, and a new significance attaches to the shop flour from which bread is ultimately produced.

Butter and cheese can easily be made, also jam, and even a Christmas pudding. In very early Kindergartens we read of the growing, digging and cooking of potatoes, and of the extraction of starch to be used as paste.

Special anniversaries require special making. We possess a doll of 1794 to whom her old mother bequeathed

her birthday. The doll's birthday is a great event, and on the previous day each class in turn bakes tiny loaves, or cakes or pastry for the party.

Christmas creates a need for decorations, Christmas cards and presents, and Empire Day and Trafalgar Day for flags, while in many places there is an annual sale on behalf of a charity.

It does not do to be too modern and to despise all the old-fashioned "makings," which gave such pleasure some years ago. Kindergarten Paper-folding has fallen into an undeserved oblivion. The making of boats or cocked-hats from old newspaper is a great achievement for a child, and to make pigs and purses, corner cupboards and chairs for paper dolls is still a delight, and calls forth real concentration and effort.

Making in connection with some whole, such as the continuous representation of life around us, and, at a later stage, the re-inventing of primitive industries, or making which arises out of some special interest may have a higher educational value, but apart from this, children want to make for making's sake. "Can't I make something in wood like Boy does?" asked a little girl. There is joy in the making, joy in being a cause, and for this the children need opportunity, space and time. There is a lesson to many of us in some verses by Miss F. Sharpley, lately published (*Educational Handwork*), which should be entitled, "When can I make my little Ship?"

I'd like to cut, and cut, and cut,
  And over the bare floor
To strew my papers all about,
  And then to cut some more.

I'd sweep them up so neatly, too,
  But mother says, "Oh no!
There is no time, it's seven o'clock;
  To bed you quickly go!"

In school, I'd just begun to make
  A pretty little ship,
But I was slow, and all the rest
  Stood up to dance and skip.

When shall I make my little ship?
  At home there is no gloy,
And father builds it by himself
  Or goes to buy a toy.

CHAPTER VIII

STORIES

Let me tell the stories and I care not who makes the textbooks.

STANLEY HALL.

"Is it Bible story to-day or any *kind* of a story?" was the greeting of an eager child one morning. "Usually they were persuading him to tell stories," writes Ebers, from his recollections of Froebel as an old man at Keilhau. "He was never seen crossing the courtyard without a group of the younger pupils hanging to his coat tails and clasping his arms. Usually they were persuading him to tell stories, and when he condescended to do so, the older ones flocked around him, too, and they were never disappointed. What fire, what animation the old man had retained!"

So Froebel could write with feeling of "the joyful faces, the sparkling eyes, the merry shouts that welcome the genuine story-teller"; he had a right to pronounce that "the child's desire and craving for tales, for legends, for all kinds of stories, and later on for historical accounts, is very intense."

Surely there was never a little one who did not crave for stories, though here and there may be found an older child, who got none at the right time, and who, therefore, lost that most healthy of appetites. Most of us will agree

that there is something wrong with the child who does not like stories, but it may be that the something wrong belonged to the mother. One such said to the Abbé Klein one day, "My children have never asked for stories." "But, madame," was the reply, "neither would they ask for cake if they had never eaten it, or even seen it."

It is easy for us to find reasons why we should tell stories. We can brush aside minor aims such as increasing the child's vocabulary. Undoubtedly his vocabulary does increase enormously from listening to stories, but it is difficult to imagine that any one could rise to real heights in story-telling with this as an aim or end. That the narrator should clothe his living story in words expressive of its atmosphere, and that the listener should in this way gain such power over language, that he, too, can fitly express himself is quite another matter.

First, then, we tell stories because we love to tell them and because the children love to listen. We choose stories that appeal to our audience. It is something beautiful, humorous, heroic or witty that we have found, and being social animals we want to share it. As educators with an aim before us, we deliberately tell stories in order to place before our children ideals of unselfishness, courage and truth. We know from our own experience, not only in childhood, but all through life how the story reaches our feelings as no sermon or moralising ever does, and we have learned that "out of the heart are the issues of life." Unguided feelings may be a danger, but the story does more than rouse feelings—it gives opportunity for the exercise of moral judgement, for the exercise of judgement upon questions of right and wrong. Feeling is aroused, but it is not usually a personal feeling, so judgement is likely to be unbiassed. It may, however, be biassed by the tone absorbed from the environment even in childhood, as when the mother makes more of table etiquette than of kindness, and the child,

instead of condemning Jacob's refusal to feed his hungry brother with the red pottage, as all natural children do condemn, says: "No, Esau shouldn't have got it, 'cause he asked for it."

As a rule, the children's standard is correct enough, and approval or condemnation is justly bestowed, provided that the story has been chosen to suit the child's stage of development. One little girl objected strongly to Macaulay's ideal Roman, who "in Rome's quarrel, spared neither land nor gold, nor son nor wife." "That wasn't right," she said stoutly, "he ought to think of his own wife and children first." She was satisfied, however, when it was explained to her that Horatius might be able to save many fathers to many wives and children. In my earliest teaching days, having found certain history stories successful with children of seven, I tried the same with children of six, but only once. Edmund of East Anglia dying for his faith fell very flat. "What was the good of that?" said one little fellow, "'cause if you're dead you can't do anything! But if you're alive, you can get more soldiers and win a victory." The majority of the class, however, seemed to feel with another who asked, "Why didn't he promise while the Danes were there? He needn't have kept it when they went away."

Another way of stating our aim in telling stories to children is that a story presents morality in the concrete. Virtues and vices *per se* neither attract nor repel, they simply mean nothing to a child, until they are presented as the deeds of man or woman, boy or girl, living and acting in a world recognised as real. One telling story is that of the boy who got hold of Miss Edgeworth's *Parent's Assistant* and who said to his mother, "Mother, I've been reading 'The Little Merchants' and I know now how horrid it is to cheat and tell lies." "I have been telling you that ever since you could speak," said his mother, to which the boy

answered, "Yes, I know, but that didn't interest me." Our children had been told the story of how the Countess of Buchan crowned the Bruce, a duty which should have been performed by her brother the Earl of Fife, who, however, was too much afraid of the wrath of English Edward. A few days after, an argument arose and one little girl was heard to say, "I don't want to be brave," and a boy rejoined, "Girls don't need to be brave." I said, "Which would you rather be, the Countess who put the crown on the King's head, or the brother who ran away?" And quickly came the answer, "Oh! the brave Countess," from the very child who didn't want to be brave!

Froebel sums up the teacher's aim in the words: "The telling of stories is a truly strengthening spirit-bath, it gives opportunity for the exercise of all mental powers, opportunity for testing individual judgement and individual feelings."

But why is it that children crave for stories? "Education," says Miss Blow, a veteran Froebelian, "is a series of responses to indicated needs," and undoubtedly the need for stories is as pressing as the need to explore, to experiment and to construct. What is the unconscious need that is expressed in this craving, why is this desire so deeply implanted by Nature? So far, no one seems to have given a better answer than Froebel has done, when he says that the desire for stories comes out of the need to understand life, that it is in fact rooted in the instinct of investigation. "Only the study of the life of others can furnish points of comparison with the life the boy himself has experienced. The story concerns other men, other circumstances, other times and places, yet the hearer seeks his own image, he beholds it and no one knows that he sees it."

Man cannot be master of his surroundings till he investigates and so gathers knowledge. But he has to adapt himself not only to the physical but to the human

environment in which he lives. In stories of all kinds, children study human life in all kinds of circumstances, nay, if the story is sufficiently graphic they almost go through the experiences narrated, almost live the new life.

With very young children the most popular of all stories is the "The Three Bears" and it is worth a little analysis. A little girl runs away, and running away is a great temptation to little girls and boys, as great an adventure as running off to sea will be at a later stage. She goes into a wood and meets bears: what else could you expect! The story then deals with really interesting things, porridge, basins, chairs and beds. The strong contrast of the bears' voices fascinates children, and just when retribution might descend upon her, the heroine escapes and gets safe home. Children revel in the familiar details, but these alone would not suffice, there must be adventure, excitement, romance. One feels that Southey had the assistance of a child in making his story so complete, and we can hear the questions: "How did the big bear know that the little girl had tasted his porridge? Oh, because she had left the spoon. How did he know that she had sat in his chair? Because she left the cushion untidy, and as for the little bear's chair, why, she sat that right out."

That quite little children desire fresh experiences or adventures and really exciting ones, is shown by the following stories made by children. The first two are by a little girl of two-and-a-half, the third is taken from Lady Glenconner's recently published *The Sayings of the Children.*

"Once upon a time there was a giant and a little girl, and he told a little girl not to kiss a bear acos he would bite her, and the little girl climbed right on his back and she jumped right down the stairs and the bear came walking after the little girl and kissing her, and she called it a little bear and it was a big bear! (immense amusement).

"Once upon a time there was a little piggy and he was right in a big green and white fire and he didn't hurt hisself, and (told as a tremendous secret) he touched a fire with his handie. 'What a naughty piggy,' said Auntie, 'and what next?' He jumped right out of a fire. Auntie, can you smile? (For aunties cannot smile when people are naughty.)

The third story is said to have been filled with pauses due to a certain slowness of speech, but the pauses are "lit by the lightning flash of a flying eyebrow, and the impressive nodding of a silken head."

"Once, you know, there was a fight between a little pony and a lion, and the lion sprang against the pony and the pony put his back against a stack and bited towards the lion, and the lion rolled over and the pony jumped up, and he ran up . . . and the pony turned round and the lion . . ."

His mother felt she had lost the thread. "Which won?" she asked. "Which won!" he repeated and after a moment's pause he said, "Oh! the little bear."

This surprising conclusion points to a stage when it is difficult for a child to hold the thread of a narrative, and at this stage, along with simple stories of little ones like themselves, repetition or "accumulation" stories seem to give most pleasure. "Henny Penny" and "Billy Bobtail"—told by Jacobs as "How Jack went to seek his Fortune"—are prime favourites. Repetition of rhythmic phrases has a great attraction, as in "Three Little Pigs," with its delightful repetition of "Little pig, little pig, let me come in," "No, no, by the hair of my chinny chin chin," "Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in."

Very soon, however, the children are ready for the time-honoured fairy-tale or folk-tale.

The orthodox beginning, "Once upon a time, in a certain country there lived . . . ," fits the stage when neither time nor place is of any consequence. Animals speak, well why

not, we can! The fairies accomplish wonders, again why not? Wonderful things do happen and they must have a wonderful cause, and, as one child said, if there never had been any fairies, how could people have written stories about them? Goodness is rewarded and wickedness is punished, as is only right in the child's eyes, and goodness usually means kindness, the virtue best understood of children. Obedience is no doubt the nursery virtue in the eyes of authority, but kindness is much more human and attractive.

"Both child and man," says Froebel, "desire to know the significance of what happens around them; this is the foundation of Greek choruses, especially in tragedy, and of many productions in the realm of legends and fairy-tales. It is the result of the deep-rooted consciousness, the slumbering premonition of being surrounded by that which is higher and more conscious than ourselves." The fairy-tale is the child's mystery land, his recognition that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy or in our science. Dr. Montessori protests against the idea that fairy-tales have anything to do with the religious sense, saying that "faith and fable are as the poles apart." She does not understand that it is for their truth that we value fairy-tales. The truths they teach are such as that courage and intelligence can conquer brute strength, that love can brave and can overcome all dangers and always finds the lost, that kindness begets kindness and always wins in the end. The good and the faithful marries the princess—or the prince—and lives happy ever after. And assuredly if he does not marry his princess, he will not live happy, and if she does not marry the prince, she will live in no beautiful palace. And there is more. Take for instance, the story of "Toads and Diamonds." The courteous maiden who goes down the well, who gives help where it is needed, and who works faithfully for Mother

Holle,[1] comes home again dropping gold and diamonds when she speaks. Her silence may be silver, but her speech is golden, and her words give light in dark places. The selfish and lazy girl, who refuses help and whose work is unfaithful and only done for reward, has her reward. Henceforth, when she speaks, down fall toads and snakes her words are cold as she is, they may glitter but they sting.

Fairy- and folk-tales give wholesome food to the desire for adventure, whereas in what we may call realistic stories, adventure is chiefly confined to the naughty child, who is therefore more attractive than the good and stodgy. Even among fairy-tales we may select. "Beauty and the Beast" and "The Sleeping Beauty" and "Snow-white and Rose-red" are distinctly preferable to "Jack the Giant Killer" or "Puss in Boots," while "Bluebeard" cannot be told. It seems to me that children can often safely read for themselves stories the adult cannot well tell. The child's notion of justice is crude, bad is bad, and whether embodied in an ogre or in Pharaoh of Egypt, it must be got rid of, put out of the story No child is sorry for the giant when Jack's axe cleaves the beanstalk, and as for Pharaoh, "Well, it's a good thing he's drowned, for he was a bad man, wasn't he?" Death means nothing to children, as a rule, except disappearance. When children can read for themselves, they will take from their stories what suits their stage of development, their standard of judgement, and we need not interfere, even though they regard with perfect calm what seems gruesome to the adult.

As a valuable addition to the best-known fairy-tales, we may mention one or two others: *Grannie's Wonderful Chair* is a delightful set of stories, full of charming pictures, though the writer, Frances Brown, was born blind. Mrs. Ewing's stories for children, *The Brownies*, with *Amelia and the Dwarfs* and *Timothy's Shoes*, are inimitable, and her

[1] This version is probably a mixture of the versions of Perrault and Grimm but Mother Holle shaking her feathers is worth bringing in.

Old-Fashioned Fairy Tales are very good, but not for very young children. Her other stories are certainly about children, but are, as a rule, written for adults.

George Macdonald's stories are all too well known and too universally beloved to need recommendation. But in telling them, *e.g.* "The Princess and the Goblins" or "At the Back of the North Wind," the young teacher must remember that they are beautiful allegories. Before she ventures to tell them, the beginner should ponder well what the poet—for these are prose poems—means, and who is represented by the beautiful Great-great-grandmother always old and always young, or "North Wind" who must sink the ship but is able to bear the cry from it, because of the sound of a far-off song, which seems to swallow up all fear and pain and to set the suffering "singing it with the rest."

Water-Babies is a bridge between the fairy-tale of a child and equally wonderful and beautiful fairy-tales of Nature, and it, too, is full of meaning. If the teacher has gained this, the children will not lag behind. It was a child of backward development, who, when she heard of Mother Carey, "who made things make themselves," said, "Oh! I know who that was, that was God."

Such stories must be spread out over many days of telling, but they gain rather than lose from that, though for quite young children the stories do require to be short and simple, and often repeated. If children get plenty of these, the stage for longer stories is reached wonderfully soon.

Pseudo-scientific stories, in which, for example, a drop of water discusses evaporation and condensation, are not stories at all, but a kind of mental meat lozenge, most unsatisfying and probably not even fulfilling their task of supplying nourishment in form of facts. Fables usually deal with the faults and failings of grown-ups, and may be

left for children to read for themselves, to extract what suits them.

Illustrations are not always necessary, but if well chosen they are always a help. Warne has published some delightfully illustrated stories for little children, "The Three Pigs," "Hop o' my Thumb," "Beauty and the Beast," etc. They are illustrated by H. M. Brock and by Leslie Brooke, and they really are illustrated. The artists have enjoyed the stories and children equally enjoy the pictures.

The teacher must consider what ideas she is presenting and whether words alone can convey them properly. We must remember that most children visualise and that they can only do so from what they have seen. So, without illustrations, a castle may be a suburban house with Nottingham lace curtains and an aspidistra, while Perseus or Moses may differ little from the child's own father or brothers. Again, town children cannot visualise hill and valley, forest and moor, brook and river, not to mention jungles and snowfields and the trackless ocean. It is not easy to find pictures to give any idea of such scenes, but it is worth while to look for them, and it is also worth while for the teacher to visualise, and to practise vivid describing of what she sees. Children, of course, only want description when it is really a part of the story, as when Tom crosses the moor, descends Lewthwaite Crag, or travels from brook to river and from river to sea.

As to how a story should be told, opinions differ. It must be well told with a well-modulated voice and with slight but effective gesture. But the model should be the story as told in the home, not the story told from a platform. The children need not be spellbound all the time, but should be free to ask sensible questions and to make childlike comments in moderation. The language should fit the subject; beautiful thoughts need beauty of expression, high and noble deeds must be told in noble language. A

teacher who wishes to be a really good teller of stories must herself read good literature, and she will do well not only to prepare her stories with care, but to consider the language she uses in daily life. There is a happy medium between pedantry and the latest variety of slang, and if daily speech is careless and slipshod, it is difficult to change it for special occasions. Our stories should not only prepare for literature, they should be literature, and those who realise what the story may do for children will not grudge time spent in preparation. If the story is to present an ideal, let us see that we present a worthy one; if it is to lead the children to judge of right and wrong, let us see that we give them time and opportunity to judge and that we do not force their judgement.

Lastly, if the story is to make the children feel, let us see that the feeling is on the right side, that they shrink from all that is mean, selfish, cruel and cowardly, and sympathise with whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report.

CHAPTER IX

IN GRASSY PLACES

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky,
So was it when my life began
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die.

WHAT is the real aim of what we call Nature-lessons, Nature-teaching, Nature-work? It is surely to foster delight in beauty, so that our hearts shall leap up at sight of the rainbow until we die. For, indeed, if we lose that uplift of the heart, some part of us has died already. Yet even Wordsworth mourns that nothing can bring back the hour of splendour in the grass and glory in the flower!

In its answer to the question "What is the chief end of man?" the old Shorter Catechism has a grand beginning: "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever." Do we lose the vision because we are not bold enough to take that enjoyment as our chief end? To enjoy good is to enjoy God.

Our ends or aims are our desires, and Mr. Clutton Brock, in his *Ultimate Belief*, urges teachers to recognise that the spirit of man has three desires, three ends, and that it cannot be satisfied till it attains all three. Man desires to do right, so far as he sees it, for the sake of doing right; he desires to gain knowledge or to know for the sake of knowing, for the sake of truth; and he desires beauty.

"We do not value that which we call beautiful because it is true, or because it is good, but because it is beautiful. There is a glory of the universe which we call truth which we discover and apprehend, and a glory of the universe which we call beauty and which we discover or apprehend."

Froebel begins his *Education of Man* by an inquiry into the reason for our existence and his answer is that *all* things exist to make manifest the spirit, the *élan vital*, which brought them into being. "*Sursum corda*," says Stevenson,

> Lift up your hearts
> Art and Blue Heaven
> April and God's Larks
> Green reeds and sky scattering river
> A Stately Music
> Enter God.

And Browning? "If you get simple beauty and nought else, you get about the best thing God invents."

To let children get that beauty should be our aim, and they must get it in their own way. "Life in and with Nature and with the fair silent things of Nature, should be fostered by parents and others," Froebel tells us, "as a chief fulcrum of child-life, and this is accomplished chiefly in play, which is at first simply natural life."

Let us surmount the ruts of our teaching experience and climb high enough to look back upon our own childhood, to see where beauty called to us, where we attained to beauty.

Among my own earliest recollections come a first view of the starry sky and the discovery of Heaven. No one called attention to the stars, they spoke themselves to a child of four or five and declared "the glory of God." Heaven was not on high among these glorious stars, however. It was a grassy place with flowers and sunshine. It had to be Heaven because you went through the cemetery to reach it, and because it was so bright and

flowery and there were no graves in it. I never found it again, because I had forgotten how to get there.

Another very early memory is one of grief, to see from the window how the gardener was mowing down all the daisies, and there were so many, in the grass; and yet another is of a high, grassy, sunny field with a little stream running far down below. It was not really far and there was nothing particularly beautiful in the place to grown-up eyes, but the beholder was very small and loved it dearly. To his Art and Blue Heaven Stevenson might have added Sun and Green Grass. For he knew what grassy places are to the child, and that "happy play in grassy places" might well be Heaven to the little one.

A most interesting little book called *What is a Kindergarten?*[1] was published some years ago in America. It is written by a landscape gardener, and contains most valuable suggestions as to how best to use for a Kindergarten or Nursery School plots of ground which may be secured for that purpose. Naturally the writer has much to say on the laying out and stocking the available space to the best advantage, choosing the most suitable positions for the house, where the teacher must live, he says, to supply the atmosphere of a home; for animal hutches, for sand-heaps and seesaws; for the necessary shelter, for the children's gardens, and for the lawn, for even on his smallest plan, a "twenty-five-foot lot," we find "room for a spot of green." Later he explains that for this green one must use what will grow, and if grass will not perhaps clover will. The way in which the trees and plants are chosen is most suggestive. Beauty and suitability are always considered, but he remembers his own youth, and also considers the special joys of childhood. For it is not Nature lessons that come into his calculations but "the mere association of plants and children." So the birch tree is chosen, partly for its grace and beauty, but also

[1] G. Hansen, pub. Elder, Morgan & Shepherd, San Francisco, 1891.

because of its bark, for one can scribble on its papery surface; the hazel, because children delight in the catkins with their showers of golden dust, and the nut "hidden in its cap of frills and tucks." And he adds: "How much more alluring than the naked fruit from the grocer's sack are these nuts, especially when dots for eyes and mouth are added, and a whole little face is tucked within this natural bonnet."

In addition to the flowers chosen for beauty of colour, this lover of children and of gardens wants Canterbury Bells to ring, Forget-me-nots because they can stand so much watering, and "flowers with faces," pansies, sweet-peas, lupins, snapdragons, monkey flowers, red and white dead nettles, and red clover to bring the bees. Some of these are chosen because the child can do something with them, can find their own uses for them, can play with them. And, speaking generally, playing with them is the child's way of appreciating both plant and animal. Picking feathery grasses, red-tipped daisies, sweet-smelling clover and golden dandelions; feeding snapdragons with fallen petals, finding what's o'clock by blowing dandelion fruits, paying for dock tea out of a fairy purse, shading poppy dolls with woodruff parasols, that is how a child enjoys the beauty of colour, scent and form. He gets not more but less beauty when he must sit in a class and answer formal questions. "Must we talk about them before we take the flowers home?" asked a child one day; "they are so pretty." Clearly, the "talk" was going to lessen, not to deepen the beauty. And animals? The child plays with cat and dog, he feeds the chickens, the horse and the donkey, he watches with the utmost interest caterpillar, snail and spider, but he does not want to be asked questions about them—he does want to talk and perhaps to ask the questions himself—nor does he always want even to draw, paint or model them. Mostly he wants to watch, and perhaps just to stir

them up a little if they do not perform to his satisfaction. He does not necessarily mean to tease, only why should he watch an animal that does nothing? "The animals haven't any habits when I watch them," a little girl once said to Professor Arthur Thomson.

All children should live in the country at least for part of the year. They should know fields and gardens, and have intercourse with hens and chickens, cows and calves, sheep and lambs; should make hay and see the corn cut. They would still want the wisely sympathetic teacher, not to arouse interest—that is not necessary, but to keep it alive by keeping pace with the child's natural development. It is not merely living in the country that develops the little child's interest in shape and colour and scent into something deeper. People still "spend all their time in the fields and forests and see and feel nothing of the beauties of Nature, and of their influence on the human heart"; and this, said Froebel—and it is just what Mr. Clutton Brock is saying now—is because the child "fails to find the same feelings among adults." Two effects follow: the child feels the want of sympathy and loses some respect for the elder, and also he loses his original joy in Nature.

"There is in every human being the passionate desire for this self-forgetfulness—to which it attains when it is aware of beauty—and a passionate delight in it when it comes. The child feels that delight among spring flowers; we can all remember how we felt it in the first apprehension of some new beauty of the universe, when we ceased to be little animals and became aware that there was this beauty outside us to be loved. And most of us must remember, too, the strange indifference of our elders. They were not considering the lilies of the field; they did not want us to get our feet wet among them. We might be forgetting ourselves, but they were remembering us; and we became suddenly aware of the bitterness of life and the tyranny of

facts. Now parents and nurses (and teachers) have, of course, to remember children when they forget themselves. But they ought to be aware that the child, when he forgets himself in the beauty of the world, is passing through a sacred experience which will enrich and glorify the whole of his life. Children, because they are not engaged in the struggle for life, are more capable of this aesthetic self-forgetfulness than they will afterwards be; and they need all of it that they can get; so that they may remember it and prize it in later years. In these heaven-sent moments they know what disinterestedness is. They have a test by which they can value all future experience and know the dullness and staleness of worldly success. Therefore it is a sin to check, more than need be, their aesthetic delight" (*The Ultimate Belief*).

We cannot all give to our children the experiences we should like to supply, but if we are clear that we are aiming at enjoyment of Nature, and not at supplying information, we shall come nearer to what is desirable. For years, almost since it opened in 1908, Miss Reed of the Michaelis Free Kindergarten has taken her children to the country. It means a great deal of work and responsibility, it means collecting funds and giving up one's scanty leisure, it means devoted service, but it has been done, and it has been kept up even during war time, though with great difficulty as to funds, because of the inestimable benefit to the children. Miss Stokes of the Somers Town Nursery School secured a country holiday for her little ones in various ways, partly through the Children's Country Holiday Fund, but since the war she has been unable to secure help of that kind, and has managed to take the children away to a country cottage. A paragraph in the report says: "The children in the country had a delightful time, and what was seen and done during their holiday is still talked about continually. These joys entered into all the work of the nursery school and helped

the children for months to retain a breath of the country in their London surroundings. They realised much from that visit. Cows now have horns, wasps have wings and fly—alas they sting also. Hens sit on eggs, an almost unbelievable thing. Fishes, newts, tadpoles, were all met with and greeted as friends. Children and helpers alike returned home full of health and vigour and longing for the next time. One little maid wept bitterly, and there seemed no joy in life at home until she came across the school rabbit, which was tenderly caressed, and consoled her with memories of the country and hopes for future visits."

In the days when teachers argued about the differences between Object-lessons and Nature-lessons, one point insisted upon was that the Nature-lesson far surpassed the Object-lesson because it dealt with life.

We have learned now that we should as much as we can surround our children with life and growth. Even indoors it is easy to give the joy of growing seeds and bulbs and of opening chestnut branches: without any cruelty we can let them enjoy watching snails and worms and we can keep caterpillars or silkworms and so let them drink their fill of the miracle of development. But beauty comes to children in very different ways, and always it is Nature, though it may not be life.

Children revel in colour, colour for its own sake, and should be allowed to create it. In a modern novel there is a description of a mother doing her washing in the open air and "at her feet sat a baby intent upon the assimilation of a gingerbread elephant, but now and then tugging at her skirts and holding up a fat hand. Each time he was rewarded by a dab of soapsuds, which she deposited good-naturedly in his palm. He received it with solemn delight; watching the roseate play of colour as the bubbles shrank and broke, and the lovely iridescent treasure vanished in a smear of dirty wetness while he looked. Then he would

beat his fists delightedly against his mother's dress and presently demand another handful."

The following notes from another student's report show how this may spring naturally out of the children's life:[1]

"We were spinning the tee-totum yesterday and it did not spin well so we made new ones. While the children were painting their tops, Oliver grew very eager when he found he could fill in all the spaces in different colours, but Betty made her colours very insipid. I want them to get the feeling of beautiful colour, so I shall show them a book with the colours graded in it, and we shall each have a paper and paint on it all the rich colours we can think of. The colours will probably run into each other, and so the children will get ideas about the blending of colours, but I will watch to see that they do not get the colour too wet. If they are not tired of painting I want to show them a painted circle to turn on a string and they can make these for themselves, using the colours they have already used.

"I want the children to do some group work, and I thought we might make a village with shops and houses under the trees in the garden and have little men and women to represent ourselves. The suggestion will probably have to come from the teacher, but the children will probably have the desire when it is suggested, and I hope we shall be able to go on enlarging our town on the pattern of the towns the children know. If they want bricks for their houses they can dig clay in the garden.

"*Report.*—The children wanted to make a tea-set, so we carried our clay outside. They began discussing why their china would not be so fine as the china at home, and I said the clay might be different. Then Bernard asked what sort of china we should get from the clay in the garden, and I told him that kind of clay was generally made into

[1] Miss Edith Jones.

bricks, and suggested making bricks. From that we went on to the use of bricks, and to-morrow we are going to dig, and make bricks to build a town. Bernard is anxious to know how we shall make mortar. Just then it started to rain, and Bernard said that if the sun kept shining and it rained hard enough we should have a rainbow, and he wished it would come so as to see the beautiful colours. I thought this rather a coincidence, and told him I had a book with all the rainbow colours in it. They asked to see it, so I showed it and suggested painting the colours ourselves. Those who had finished their dishes started, and we talked about the richness of the colours. One or two children started with very watery colour, so I showed them the book and began to paint myself. They all enjoyed it very much, especially the different colours made where the colours ran into each other. The results pleased them and they are to be used as wall-papers to sell in our town, but Sybil wants to have a toy shop, and she is going to make a painted circle for it like the one I showed."

This is clearly the time to show a glass prism and to let these children make rainbows for themselves, to tell the story of Iris, and to use any colour material, Milton Bradley spectrum papers, Montessori silks, colour top, and anything else so long as the children keep up their interest. The interest in colour need never die out; it will probably show itself now in finer discrimination, and more careful reproduction of the colours of flowers and leaves, and the sympathy given will heighten interest and increase enjoyment.

Here are some notes showing children's numerous activities in a suburban garden where they were allowed to visit a hen and chickens.

"*Monday.*[1]—To-day the children took up their mustard and cress, dug and raked the ground ready for transplanting

[1] These notes are part of those already given on pp. 68-71.

the lettuces. After their rest we went to see the chickens at the Hall (the Students' Hostel), and the Hall garden seemed to them a wonderful place. They watched the trains go in and out of the station at the foot of the garden, and explored all the side doors, going up and down all the steps and into the cycle shed. They helped Miss S. to stir the soot water, then they went to the grassy bank and ran down it, slid down it, and rolled down it. They peeped over the wall into the next garden, they peeped through holes in the fences and finished up with a swing in the hammock. Each child had twenty swings, and they enjoyed counting in time with the swaying of the hammock, and swayed their own bodies as they pushed.

"Another example of love of rhythm was when they went to say good-bye to the hen and chickens, and kept on repeating 'Good-bye, good-bye' all together, nodding their heads at the same time.

"I did not know if I should have let them do so much, but I was not sure that we should be allowed to come back and I wanted them to enjoy the garden.

"*Wednesday.*—First we watered the lettuces we had transplanted, and transplanted more. Then, as we had permission to come again, we took some of our lettuces to the chickens. We saw the mother hen with one wing spread right out, and the children were much surprised to see how large it was. We looked at the roses, and saw how the bud of yesterday was full blown to-day. The children again ran down and rolled down the bank, and had turns in the hammock, this time to the rhythm of "Margery Daw" sung twice through, and then counting up to twenty. Very often they went to watch the trains. Cecil is particularly interested in them, and wanted to know how long was the time between. He said three minutes, I guessed nine, but we found they were irregular. In the intervals while waiting for a train to pass, we played a

'listening' game, listening to what sounds we could hear. A thrush came and sang right over our heads, so the listening was concentrated on his song, and we tried to say what we thought he meant to say. One child said, 'He says, "Come here, come here,"' but they found this too difficult. We also watched a boy cleaning the station windows, and Dorothy said, 'Miss Beer, isn't it wonderful that you can see through glass?' I agreed, but made no other remark because I did not know what to say.

"We rested outside to-day under an almond tree. I pointed out how pretty the sky looked when you only saw it peeping through the leaves. After rest the children noticed feathery grasses, and spent the rest of the morning gathering them. I suggested that they should see how many kinds they could find. They found three, but were not enthusiastic about it, being content just to pluck, but they were delighted when they found specially long and beautiful grasses hidden deep under a leafy bush. They also found clover leaves, and I told them its name and sang to them the verse from 'The Bee,' with 'The sweet-smelling clover, he, humming, hangs over.'

"*Thursday.*—Brushed and dusted the room, gave fresh water to the flowers, and then went to gardening. The children were delighted to find ladybirds on the lettuces they were transplanting, and we also noticed how the cherries were ripening.

"They joined the Transition Class for games. Later, while playing with the sand, Cecil made a discovery. He said, 'Miss Beer, do you know, I know what sand is, it's little tiny tiny stones.'"

It may be worth while to notice some things in these notes. First the pleasure in exploring the new surroundings and then the variety of delights. Our landscape gardener mentions that "any slope to our grounds should be welcomed. . . . For as we leave the level land and flee to

the mountains to spend our vacation, so will a child avoid the street and seek the gutter and the bank on the unimproved lot to enjoy its pastime." Our own children have been fortunate enough to have a bank for their play, and though, unfortunately, extension of buildings has taken away much of this, we have had abundant opportunity to see the value of sloping ground. Then there are the discoveries, the feathery grasses, especially those which were hidden, the ladybirds, that sand is really "tiny tiny stones"—has every adult noticed that, or is sand "just sand"?—and the "wonder" that we can see through glass, a wonder realised by a little girl of four years old. Also we can notice what the children did not desire. They liked listening to the thrush, but to make out what the thrush was "saying" was beyond them. They liked gathering feathery grasses, but to sort these into different kinds gave no pleasure, though older children would have enjoyed trying to find many varieties.

Perhaps teachers with a fair amount of experience might have felt like the beginner who frankly says, "I didn't say anything more because I didn't know what to say," when Dorothy discovered the wonderfulness of glass. Perhaps we are silent because the child has gone ahead of us. It is wonderful, but we have never thought about it. In such cases we must, as Froebel says, "become a learner with the child" and humbly, with real sympathy and earnestness, ask, "Is it wonderful, I suppose it is, but I never thought about it, why do *you* call it wonderful?" If the child answers, it is well, if not the teacher can go on thinking aloud, thinking with the child. "Let's think what other things we can see through." We can never understand it, we can only reach the fact of "transparency" as a wonderful property of certain substances and consider which possess this magic quality. There is water of course, and there is jelly or gelatine, but these are not hard, they are

not stones as glass seems to be. The child will be pleased too to see a crystal or a bit of mica, but the main thing is that we should not imagine we have disposed of the wonder by a mere name with a glib, "Oh, that's just because it's transparent," but that we realise, and re-inforce and deepen the child's sense of wonderfulness. So teacher and child enter into the thoughts of Him

> Who endlessly was teaching
> Above my spirits utmost reaching,
> What love can do in the leaf or stone,
> So that to master this alone,
> This done in the stone or leaf for me,
> I must go on learning endlessly.

CHAPTER X

A WAY TO GOD

Wonders chiefly at himself
Who can tell him what he is
Or how meet in human elf
Coming and past eternities.
EMERSON.

IT is of set purpose that this short chapter, referring to what we specially call religion, is placed immediately after that on the child's attitude to Nature. The actual word religion, which, to him, expressed being bound, did not appeal to Froebel so much as one which expressed One-ness with God.

As a son can share the aspirations of his father, so man "a thought of God"

can aspire
From earth's level where blindly creep
Things perfected more or less
To the heaven's height far and steep.

But we begin at earth's level, and a child's religion must be largely a natural religion.

How to introduce a child to religion is a problem which must have many solutions. In Froebel's original training course, his Kindergarten teachers were to be "trained to the observation and care of the earliest germs of the religious instinct in man." These earliest beginnings he

found in different sources. First come the relations between the child and the family, beginning with the mother; fatherhood and motherhood must be realised before the child can reach up to the Father of all. Then there is the atmosphere of the home, the real reverence for higher things, if it exists, affects even a little child more than is usually supposed, but children are quick to distinguish reality from mere conventionality though the distinction is only half conscious. Reality impresses, while conventionality is apt to bore. Even to quite young children Froebel's ideal mother would begin to show God in nature. Some one put into the flowers the scent and colour that delight the child—some one whom he cannot see. The sun, moon and stars give light and beauty, and "love is what they mean to show." This mother teaches her little one some sort of prayer, and the gesture of reverence, the folded hands, affects the child even if the words mean little or nothing. Akin to the "feeling of community" between the child and his family is the joining in religious worship in church, "the entrance in a common life," and the emotional effect of the deep tones of the organ. Then there is the interdependence of the universe: the baby is to thank Jenny for his bread and milk, Peter for mowing the grass for the cow, "until you come to the last ring of all, God's father love for all." Next to this comes the child's service; others work for him and he also must serve. "Every age has its duties, and duties are not burdens," and it is necessary that feeling should have expression, "for even a child's love unfostered (by action in form of service) droops and dies away." There is also the desire for approbation. The child "must be roused to good by inclination, love, and respect, through the opinion of others about him," and this should be guided until he learns to care chiefly for the approval of the God within. Right ideals must be provided: religion is "a continually advancing endeavour,"

and its reward must not be a material reward. "We ought to lift and strengthen human nature, but we degrade and weaken it when we seek to lead it to good conduct by a bait, even if this bait beckons to a future world. The consciousness of having lived worthily should be our highest reward." Froebel goes so far as to say that instead of teaching "the good will be happy," and leaving children to imagine that this means an outer or material happiness, we ought rather to teach that in seeking the highest we may lose the lower. "Renunciation, the abandonment of the outer for the sake of securing the inner, is the condition for attaining highest development. Dogmatic religious instruction should rather show that whoever truly and earnestly seeks the good, must needs expose himself to a life of outer oppression, pain and want, anxiety and care." Even a child, though not a baby, can be led to see that to do good for outer reward is but enlightened selfishness.

These suggestions are taken for the most part from the *Mother Songs*, some from *The Education of Man*. Each parent or teacher must use what seems to her or to him most valuable. Some may from the beginning desire to teach the child a baby prayer, or at least to let him hear "God bless you." Others may prefer to wait for a more intelligent stage, perhaps when the child begins to ask the invariable questions—who made the flowers, the animals; who made me? If so, we must remember that children see, and hear, and think, that often in thoughtless ejaculations, or in those of heartfelt thankfulness, children may hear the name of God; that a simple story may have something that stirs thought; that churches are much in evidence; and that the conversation of little playfellows may take an unexpected turn.

To me it seems a great mistake to put before young children ideas which are really beyond the conception of an adult. There are many stories told of how children

receive teaching about the Omniscience or Omnipotence of God. The stories sound irreverent, and are often repeated as highly amusing, but they are really more pathetic. Miss Shinn tells of one poor mite who resented being constantly watched and said, "I will not be so tagged," and another said, "Then I think He's a very rude man," when, in reply to her puzzled questions, she was told that God could see her even in her bath. And the boy who said, "If I had done a thing, could God make it that I hadn't?" must have made his instructor feel somewhat foolish.

It never does harm for us honestly to confess our own limitations and our ignorance, and that is better than weak materialistic explanations, which after all explain nothing. To tell a child that the Great Father is always grieved when we are unkind or cowardly, always ready to help us and to put kindness and bravery into our hearts, that we know He has power to do that if we will let Him, but that His power is beyond our understanding: to say that He is able to keep us in all danger, and that even if we are killed we are safe in His keeping, surely that is enough. He who blessed the children uttered strong words against him who caused the little ones to stumble.

"From every point, from every object of nature and life there is a way to God. . . . The things of nature form a more beautiful ladder between heaven and earth than that seen by Jacob. . . . It is decked with flowers, and angels with children's eyes beckon us toward it." This is true, but it does not mean that we are always to be trying to make things sacred, but that we are to realise that all beauty and all knowledge and all sympathy are already sacred, and that to love such things is to love something whereby the Creator makes Himself known to us, that to enjoy them is to enjoy God.

Religion is not always explained as implying the idea of being bound, but sometimes as being set free from the

bonds of the lower or animal nature. In this sense Mr. Clutton Brock may well call it "a sacred experience" for the child, when he forgets himself in the beauty of the world. If we could all rise to a wider conception of the meaning of the word religion, we should know that it comes into all the work of the day, that it does not depend alone upon that special Scripture lesson which may become mere routine.

The greatest Teacher of all taught by stories, and when any story deepens our feelings for human nature and our recognition of the heights to which it can rise, when it makes us long for faith, courage, and love to go and do likewise, who shall say that this is not religious teaching, teaching which helps to deliver us from the bonds that hamper spiritual ascent.

Many of us will feel with Froebel that the fairy-tale, with its "slumbering premonition of being surrounded by that which is higher and more "conscious than ourselves," [1] has its place, and an important place, in religious development.

The "fairy sense," says Dr. Greville Macdonald, "is innate as the religious sense itself . . . the fairy stories best beloved are those steeped in meaning—the unfathomable meaning of life . . . such stories teach—even though no lesson was intended—the wisdom of the Book of Job: wisdom that by this time surely should have made religious teaching saner, and therefore more acceptable." [2]

Fairies, like angels, may be God's messengers. A child who had heard of St. Cuthbert as a shepherd boy being carried home from the hillside when hurt, by a man on a white horse, repeated the story in her own words, "and he thought it was a fairy of God's sent to help him."

[1] P. 85.

[2] "The Fairy-Tale in Education," by Greville Macdonald, M.D., *Child Life*, Dec. 1918.

There is, however, nothing the children love more than the Bible story, the story which shows, so simply, humanity struggling as the children struggle, failing as the children fail, and believing and trusting as the children believe, and as we at least strive to do, in the ultimate victory of Right over Wrong, of Good over Evil. But just because the stories are often so beautiful and so inspiring, the teacher should have freedom to deal with them as the spirit moves her.

What experience has taught me in this way has already been passed on to younger teachers in *Education by Life*, and there seems little more to add.

> Wonders chiefly at himself
> Who can tell him what he is.

It is for us to tell the child what he is, that he, too, like all the things he loves, is a manifestation of God. "I am a being alive and conscious upon this earth; a descendant of ancestors who rose by gradual processes from lower forms of animal life, and with struggle and suffering became man." [1]

"The colossal remains of shattered mountain chains speak of the greatness of God; and man is encouraged and lifts himself up by them, feeling within himself the same spirit and power." [2]

[1] *The Substance of Faith Allied with Science*, Sir Oliver Lodge (Methuen).
[2] *The Education of Man.*

CHAPTER XI

RHYTHM

Lo with the ancient roots of Man's nature
Twines the eternal passion of song.

THE very existence of lullabies, not to mention their abundance in all countries, the very rockers on the cradles testify to the rhythmic nature of man in infancy.

In his *Mother Songs*, Froebel couples rhythm with harmony of all kinds, not only musical harmony but harmony of proportion and colour, and in urging the very early training of "the germs of all this," he gives perhaps the chief reason for training. "If these germs do not develop and take shape as independent formations in each individual, they at least teach how to understand and to recognise those of other people. This is life-gain enough, it makes one's life richer, richer by the lives of others."

It is to the genius of M. Jacques Dalcroze that the world of to-day owes some idea of what may be effected by rhythmic training, and M. Dalcroze started his work with the same aim that Froebel set before the mother, that of making the child capable of appreciation, capable of being made "richer by the lives of others." But Froebel prophesied that far more than appreciation would come from proper rhythmic training, and this M. Dalcroze has amply proved.

"Through movement the mother tries to lead the child to consciousness of his own life. By regular rhythmic movement—this is of special importance—she brings this power within the child's own conscious control when she dandles him in her arms in rhythmic movements and to rhythmic sounds, cautiously following the slowly developing life in the child, arousing it to greater activity, and so developing it. Those who regard the child as empty, who wish to fill his mind from without, neglect the means of cultivation in word and tone which should lead to a sense of rhythm and obedience to law in all human expression. But an early development of rhythmic movement would prove most wholesome, and would remove much wilfulness, impropriety and coarseness from his life, movements, and action, and would secure for him harmony and moderation, and, later on, a higher appreciation of nature, music, poetry, and art" (*Education of Man*).

Here, then, is an aim most plainly stated, "higher appreciation of nature, music, poetry and art," and if we adopt it, we must make sure that we start on a road leading to that end.

To Kindergarten children, apart from movement, rhythm comes first in nursery rhymes, and if we honestly follow the methods of the mother we shall not teach these, but say or sing them over and over again, letting the children select their favourites and join in when and where they like. This is the true *Babies' Opera*, as Walter Crane justly names an illustrated collection. Froebel's *Mother Songs*, though containing a deal of sound wisdom in its mottoes and explanations, is an annotated, expurgated, and decidedly pedantic version of the nursery rhymes of his own country. That these should ever have been introduced to our children arose from the fact that the first Kindergarten teachers, being foreigners, did not know our own home-grown productions. Long since we have shaken off the foreign

product, in favour of our own, "Sing a Song of Sixpence," "Baa, Baa, Black Sheep" and their refreshingly cheerful compeers. Froebel's book suggests songs to suit all subjects and all frames of mind—the wind, the moon, and stars, the farm with its cows and sheep, its hens and chickens, the baker and carpenter, fish in the brook and birds in nests, the garden and the Christmas fair.

We can supply good verses for all these if we take pains to search, and if we eschew ignorant and unpoetic modern doggerel as we eschew poison. Besides the nursery rhymes, we have Stevenson with his "Wind," "Shadow," and "Swing," Christina Rossetti's "Wrens and Robins," her "Rainbow Verses" and "Brownie, Brownie, let down your milk, White as swansdown, smooth as silk." There are many others, and a recent charming addition to our stock is "Chimneys and Fairies," by Rose Fyleman. One thing we should not neglect, and that is the child's sense of humour. For the very young this is probably satisfied by the cow that jumps over the moon, the dish that runs after the spoon, Jill tumbling after Jack, and Miss Muffet running away from the spider. But older children much enjoy nonsense verses by Lewis Carroll or by Lear, and "John Gilpin" is another favourite.

It is a mistake to keep strictly within the limits of a child's understanding of the words. What we want here, as in the realm of Nature, is joy and delight, the delight that comes from musical words and rhythm, as well as from the pictures that may be called up. Even a child of four can enjoy the poetry of the Psalms without asking for much understanding.

The mother repeats her rhymes and verses solely to give pleasure, and if our aim is the deepening of appreciation, there is no reason for leaving the green and grassy path that Nature has showed to the mother for the hard and beaten track of "recitation." In our own Kindergarten

there has never been either rote learning or recitation. The older children learn the words of their songs, but not to a word-perfect stage, because words and music suggest each other. Except for that we just enjoy our verses, the children asking for their favourites and getting new ones sometimes by request sometimes not. Anything not enjoyed is laid aside. We need variety, but everything must be good of its kind, and verses about children are seldom for children. Because children love babies, they love "Where did you come from, baby dear?" but nothing like Tennyson's "Baby, wait a little longer," and especially nothing of the "Toddlekins" type has any place in the collection of a self-respecting child. It is doubtful if Eugene Field's verses are really good enough for children.

All children enjoy singing, but here, as in everything, we must keep pace with development, or the older ones, especially the boys, may get bored by what suits the less adventurous. In all cases the music should be good and tuneful, modelled not on the modern drawing-room inanity, but on the healthy and vigorous nursery rhyme or folk song.

Children also enjoy instrumental music, and will listen to piano or violin while quietly occupied, for example if they are drawing. One Nursery School teacher plays soft music to get her babies to sleep, and our little ones fidget less if some one sings softly during their compulsory rest.

"The Kindergarten Band" is another way in which children can join in rhythm. It came to us from Miss Bishop and is probably the music referred to in the description of the Pestalozzi-Froebel House. The children are provided with drums, cymbals, tambourines, and triangles, and keep time to music played on the piano. They can do some analysis in choosing which instruments are most suitable to accompany different melodies or changes from grave to gay, etc. A full account was given in *Child Life* for May 1917.

Several years ago, knowing nothing of M. Dalcroze, Miss Marie Salt began an experiment, the results of which are likely to be far-spreading and of great benefit. Desiring to help children to appreciation of good music, Miss Salt experimented deliberately with the Froebelian "learn through action," and her success has been remarkable. Because of its freedom from any kind of formality, this system is perhaps better suited to little children than the Dalcroze work, unless that is in the hands of an exceptionally gifted teacher. M. Dalcroze himself is delightfully sympathetic with little ones.

Miss Salt tells her own story in an appendix to Mr. Stewart Macpherson's *Aural Culture based on Musical Appreciation.*

Good music is played and the children listen and move freely in time to it, sometimes marching or dancing in circles, sometimes quite freely "expressing" whatever feeling the music calls forth in them. The stress is laid on listening; if you see a picture you reproduce it, if the music makes you think of trees or wind, thunder or goblins, you become what you think of. It is astonishing to see how little children learn in this way to care for music by Schumann, Mendelssohn, Grieg, Dvorák, Brahms, Chopin, and Beethoven. The music is of course selected with skill, and care is taken that the "expression" shall not make the children foolishly self-conscious. Emphasis is always placed on listening, and the children's appreciation is apparent. Such appreciation must enrich their lives.

CHAPTER XII

FROM FANCY TO FACT

Creeps ever on from fancy to the fact.

FAIRY tales suit little children because their knowledge is so limited, that "the fairies must have done it" is regarded as a satisfactory answer to early problems, just as it satisfied childlike Man. Things that to us are wonderful, children accept as commonplace, while others commonplace to us are marvels to the child. But fairy tales do not continue to satisfy all needs. As knowledge grows the child begins to distinguish between what may and what may not happen, though there will always be individual differences, and the more poetic souls are apt to suffer when the outrush of their imagination is checked by a barbed wire of fact. The question "Is it true?" and the desire for true stories arise in the average child of seven to eight years, and at that age history stories are enjoyed. Real history is of course impossible to young children, whose idea of time is still very vague, and whose understanding of the motives and actions of those immediately around them is but embryonic. They still crave for adventure and romance, and they thrill to deeds of bravery. Bravery in the fight appeals to all boys and to most girls, and it is a question for serious consideration how this admiration is to be guided, it certainly cannot be ignored. It is legitimate to admire knights who ride about "redressing human wrongs," fighting dragons and

rescuing fair ladies from wicked giants, and at this stage there is no need to draw a hard and fast line between history and legendary literature. It is good to introduce children, especially boys, to some of the Arthurian legends if only to impress the ideal, "Live pure, speak true, right wrong, else wherefore born?" Stories should always help children to understand human beings, men and women with desires and feelings like our own. But in history and geography stories we deal particularly with people who are different from ourselves, and we should help children to understand, and to sympathise with those whose surroundings and customs are not ours. They may have lived centuries ago, or they may be living now but afar off, they may be far from us in time or space, but our stories should show the reasons for their customs and actions, and should tend to lessen the natural tendency to feel superior to those who have fewer advantages, and gradually to substitute for that a sense of responsibility.

But the narration of stories is not the only way in which we can treat history. Our present Minister of Education says that history teaching ought to give "discipline in practical reasoning" and "help in forming judgements," not merely in remembering facts. Indeed he went so far as to say "eliminate dates and facts" by which, of course, he only meant that the power of reasoning, the power of forming judgements is of far more consequence than the mere possession of any quantity of facts and dates. Training in reasoning, however, must involve training in verification of facts before pronouncing judgement.

Training in practical reasoning takes a prominent place in that form of history teaching introduced by Professor Dewey. According to him, history is worth nothing unless it is "an indirect sociology," an account of how human beings have learned, so far as the world has yet learned the lesson, to co-operate with one another, a study of the growth

of society and what helps and hinders. So he finds his beginnings in primitive life, and although there is much in this that will appeal to any age, there is no doubt that children of seven to ten or eleven revel in this material.

If used at all it should be used as thinking material—here is man without tools, without knowledge, everything must be thought out. It does not do much good to hand over the material as a story, as some teachers use the Dopp series of books. These books do all the children's thinking for them. Every set of children must work things out for themselves, using their own environments and their own advantages. The teacher must read to be ready with help if the children fail, and also to be ready with the actual problems. It is astonishing how keen the children are, and how often they suggest just what has really happened. Where there is space out-of-doors and the children can find branches for huts, clay for pots, etc., the work is much easier for the teacher and more satisfactory. But even where that is impossible and where one has sometimes to be content with miniature reproductions, the interest is most keen. Children under eight cannot really produce fire from flints or rubbing sticks, nor can they make useable woollen threads with which to do much weaving. But even they can get sparks from flint, make a little thread from wool, invent looms and weave enough to get the ideas.

The romance of "long ago" ought to be taken advantage of to deepen respect for the dignity of labour. Our lives are so very short that we are apt to get out of perspective in the ages. Reading and writing are so new—it is only about four hundred years since the first book was printed in England, the Roman occupation lasted as long, and who thinks of that as a long period? Perhaps it is because we are in the reading and writing age that our boys and girls must become "braw, braw clerks," instead of living on and by the land. History, particularly primitive history, should

help us all to be "grateful to those unknown pioneers of the human race to whose struggles and suffering, discoveries and energies our present favoured mode of existence on the planet is due. The more people realise the effort that has preceded them and made them possible, the more are they likely to endeavour to be worthy of it: the more pitiful also will they feel when they see individuals failing in the struggle upward and falling back toward a brute condition; and the more hopeful they will ultimately become for the brilliant future of a race which from such lowly and unpromising beginnings has produced the material vehicle necessary for those great men who flourished in the recent period which we speak of as antiquity." [1]

Professor Dewey urges that "the industrial history of man is not a materialistic or merely utilitarian affair," but a matter of intelligence, a record of how men learned to think, and also an ethical record, "the account of the conditions which men have patiently wrought out to serve their ends."

This interest in how human beings have created themselves and their surroundings ought to be deeply interesting to any and every age. Young children can reach so little that one hopes the interest aroused will be lasting and lead to fruitful work later. But it certainly makes a good foundation for the study of history and geography, if history is treated as sociology and if geography is recognised as the study of man in his environment.

Coming now to practical details, in our own work we have followed fairly closely the suggestions made by Professor Dewey, but everything must vary from year to year according to the suggestions of the children or their apparent needs. One extra step we have found necessary, and that is to spend some time over a desert island or Robinson Crusoe stage. Some children can do without it, but all enjoy it, and the duller children find it difficult to

[1] *The Substance of Faith*, p. 18.

imagine a time when "you could buy it in a shop" does not fit all difficulties. They can easily grasp the idea of sailing away to a land "where no man had ever been before," and playing at desert island has always been a joy.

The starting-points for primitive life have been various; sometimes the work has found its beginning in chance conversation, as when a child asked, "Are men animals?" and the class took to the suggestion that man meant thinking animal, and began to consider what he had thought. Often after Robinson Crusoe there has been a direct question, "How did Robinson Crusoe know how to make his things; had any one taught him? Who made the things he had seen; who made the very first and how did he know?" One answer invariably comes, "God taught them," which can be met by saying this is true, but that God "teaches" by putting things into the world and giving men power to think. This leads to a discussion about things natural, "what God makes" and what man makes, which is sometimes illuminating on the limited conceptions of town children. Years ago we named primitive man "the Long-Ago People," and the title has seemed to give satisfaction, though once we had the suggestion of "Old-Time Men."

We always start with the need for food, and the children suggest all the wild fruits they know, often leaving out nuts till asked if there is anything that can be stored for winter. Roots are not always given, but buds of trees is a frequent answer. Children in the country ought to explore and to dig, and in our own playground we find at least wild barley, blackberries of a sort, cherries, hard pears, almonds and cherry gum. Killing animals for food is suggested, and the children have to be told that the animals were fierce and to realise that in these times man was hunted, not hunter. Little heads are quite ready to tackle the problem of defence and attack. They could throw stones, use sticks that the wind blew down, pull up a young tree, or "a lot

of people could hang on to a branch and get it down." When one child suggested finding a dead animal and using it for food, some were disgusted, but a little girl said, "I don't suppose they would mind, they wouldn't be very particular."

The idea of throwing stones starts the examination of different kinds, which have to be provided for the purpose. Flint is invariably selected, and for months the children keep bringing "lovely sharp flints," but there is much careful observation, observation which has a motive. "I would put a stone in a stick and chuck it at them" is followed by much experiment at fixing. String is of course taboo, but bass is allowed because it grows, also strips of skin. We very often get the suggestion "they might find a stone with a hole in it," which leads to renewed searching and to the endeavour to make holes. To make a hole in flint is beyond us, but in a softer stone it can be done.

Then may come the question of safety and tree-climbing, and how to manage with the babies. Children generally know that tiny babies can hold very tight, and have various ideas for the mother. How to keep the baby from falling brings the idea of twisting in extra branches, which is recognised as a cradle in the tree, and the children delight in this as a meaning for "Rock-a-bye, baby, in the tree-top." The possibility of tree-shelters comes in, and various experiments are made, sometimes in miniature, sometimes in the garden. Out of this comes the discussion of clothes. Animals' skins is an invariable suggestion, though all children do not realise that what they call "fur" means skin.

Skin is provided, and much time is taken in experimenting to see if it can be cut with bits of flint. How could the long-ago people fasten on the skins, brings the answers "by thorns," "tie with narrow pieces," and the children are pleased to see that their own leather belts are strips or

straps. Sometimes much time is taken up in cutting out "skins to wear" from paper or cheap calico, the children working in pairs, one kneeling down while the other fits on the calico to see where the head and legs come. The skins are painted or chalked, and pictures are consulted to see whether the chosen animals are striped or spotted.

It may be stated here that we are not very rigid about periods or climates, and that our long-ago people are of a generalised type. Our business is not to supply correct information on anthropological questions, but to call forth thought and originality, to present opportunities for closer observation than was ever evoked by observation lessons, and for experiments full of meaning and full of zest. Naturally we do not despise correct information, but these children are very young and all this work is tentative. We are never dogmatic, it is all "Do you think they might have . . ." or "Well, I know what I should have done; I should have . . ." and the teacher's reply is usually "Suppose we try."

Children are apt of course to make startling remarks, but it is only the teacher who is startled by: "Was all this before God's birthday?" "I don't think God had learned to be very clever then." It is a curious fact, but orthodox opinion has only twice in the course of many years brought up Adam and Eve. Probably this is because we never talk about the first man, but about how things were discovered. The first time the question did come up Miss Payne was taking the subject, and she suggested that Adam and Eve were never in this country, which disposed of difficulties so well that I gave the same answer the only time I ever had to deal with the question.

When we come to the problem of fire, we always use parts of Miss Dopp's story of *The Tree-Dwellers*. If the children are asked if they ever heard of fire that comes by itself, or of things being burned by fire that no human

being had anything to do with, one or two are sure to suggest lightning. They will tell that lightning sometimes sets trees on fire, that thunderstorms generally come after hot dry weather, and that if lightning struck a tree with dry stuff about the fire would spread, and the long-ago people would run away. A question from the teacher as to what these people might think about it may bring the suggestion of a monster; if not, one only has to say that it must have seemed as if it was eating the trees to get "They would think it was a dreadful animal." Then the story can be told of how the boy called Bodo stopped to look and saw the monster grow smaller, so he went closer, fed it on wood, and liked to feel its warm breath after the heavy rain that follows thunder—why had the monster grown smaller?—found that no animal would come near it and so on. We never tell of the "fire country," though sometimes the children read the book for themselves a little later.

We have never succeeded in making flames, but it is thrilling to get sparks from flint. Once a child brought an old tinder box with steel and flint, but even then we were not skilful enough to get up a flame. Still it is something to have tried, and we are left with a respectful admiration for those who could so easily do without matches.

What made these long-ago people think of using their fire to cook food? Our children have suggested that a bit of raw meat fell into the fire by accident, and we have also worked it out in this way. We were pretending to warm ourselves by the fire, and I said my frozen meat was so cold that it hurt my teeth. "Hold it to the fire then." We burned our fingers, and sticks were suggested, but we sucked the burnt fingers, and I said, "It tastes good," and the children shouted with glee "Because the meat's roasted really." Then something was supposed to drop, and the cry was "Gravy! catch it in a shell, dip your finger in and let your baby suck it." A small shell was suggested,

and the boy who said "And put a stick in for a handle" was dubbed "the spoon-maker." At that time we were earning names for ourselves by suggestions; we started with Fair Hair, Curly Hair, Big Teeth, Long Legs, and arrived at Quick Runner, Climber, and even Thinker.

We have got at pottery in a similar way. The meat was supposed to be tough. "Soak it" came at once, and "Could you get hot water?" Then came suggestions: a stone saucepan, scoop out a stone and put it on the fire, build a stone pan and fix the stones with cherry gum, dig a hole in the ground and put fire under; "*that* would be a kind of oven." When asked if water would stay in the hole, and if any kind of earth would hold water, the answer may be, "No, nothing but clay, and you'd have to make that." "No! you get clay round a well. My cousin has a well, and there's clay round it." "Why, there's clay in the playground." "You could put the meat into a skin bag or a basket." Asked if the skin or basket could be set on the fire, or if anything could be done to keep the basket from catching fire, the answer comes, "Yes, dab clay round it. Then," joyfully, "it would hold water and you *could* boil." "What would happen to the clay when it was put on the fire?" This has to be discovered by a quick experiment, but the children readily guess that when the hot water is taken off the fire there would be "a sort of clay basin. Then they could make more! and plates and cups!"

Experiments depend upon circumstances and upon the age of the children. A thick and tiny basin put into a hot part of an ordinary fire does harden and hold water to a certain extent even without glazing. But elaborate baking may also be done.

I have found it convenient to take weaving as a bridge to history stories, by using Sir Frederick Leighton's picture of the Phoenicians bartering cloth for skins with the early

Britons. The children are told that the people dressed in cloth come from near the Bible-story country, and those dressed in skins are the long-ago people of this very country. What would these people think of the cloth? "They would think it was animals' skins." And what would they do? "They'd feel it and look at it." So cloth is produced and we pull it to pieces, first into threads and then into hairs, and the children say the hairs are like "fur." Then sheep's wool is produced and we try to make thread. Attempts at thread-making and then at weaving last a long time, and along with this come some history stories, probably arising out of the question, "How did people know about all this?" The children are told about the writings of Julius Caesar, and pictures of Roman ships and houses are shown, beside pictures of coracles and bee-hive dwellings, etc. Old coins, a flint battle-axe, some Roman pottery are also shown, along with descriptions and pictures of the Roman villa at Brading and other Roman remains. The children are thus helped to realise that other countries exist where the people were far ahead of those in this country, and they can begin to understand how social conditions vary, and how nations act upon each other.

The work varies considerably from year to year, according to how it takes hold upon the children's interest. But children of eight to nine are usually considered ready for broad ideas of the world as a whole, and the inquiry into where Julius Caesar came from, and why he came, gives a fair start.

CHAPTER XIII

NEW NEEDS AND NEW HELPS

I am old, so old, I can write a letter.

WRITING and reading have no place in the actual Kindergarten, much less arithmetic. The stories are told to the child; drawing, modelling and such-like will express all he wants to express in any permanent form, and speech, as Froebel says, is "the element in which he lives." His counting is of the simplest, and the main thing is to see that he does not merely repeat a series while he handles material, but that the series corresponds with the objects. Even this can be left alone if it seems to annoy the little one. In the school he is on a very different level, he has attained to the abstract, he can use signs: he can express thoughts which he could not draw, and can communicate with those who are absent. He can read any letter received and he is no longer dependent on grown-ups for stories. He can count his own money and can get correct change in small transactions, and he can probably do a variety of sums which are of no use to him at all.

Between these two comes what Froebel called the Transition or Connecting Class, in which the child learns the meaning of the signs which stand for speech, and those which make calculation less arduous for weak memories.

Much has been written as to when and how children

are to be taught to read. Some great authorities would put it off till eight or even ten. Stanley Hall says between six and eight, while Dr. Montessori teaches children of five and even of four. Froebel would have supported Stanley Hall and would wait till the age of six. The strongest reason for keeping children back from books is a physiological one. In the *Psychology and Physiology of Reading*[1] strong arguments are adduced against early reading as very injurious to eyesight, so it is surprising that Dr. Montessori begins so soon. It has been said that her children only learn to write, not to read, but it is to be supposed that they can read what they write, and therefore can read other material.

If we agree not to begin until six years old, the next question is the method. The alphabetic, whereby children were taught the letter names and then memorised the spelling of each single word, has no supporters. But controversy still goes on as to whether children shall begin with word wholes or with the phonic sounds. It is not a matter of vital importance, for the children who begin with words come to phonics later, and so far as English is concerned, the children who begin with phonics cannot go far without meeting irregularities, unless indeed they are limited to books like those of Miss Dale.

In other languages which are phonic the difficulties are minimised. Children in the ordinary Elementary Schools in Italy, though taught in large classes, can write long sentences to dictation in four or five months.[2] But in Italian each letter has its definite sound and every letter is sounded. It is true that these children appear to spend most of their time in formal work.

[1] By E. B. Huey, A.M., Ph.D. (Macmillan.)

[2] A class of children who began in the middle of October wrote correctly to dictation on March 28, "Patria e lavoro siamo, miei cari bambini, parole sante per voi. Amate la nostra cara e bella Italia. crescete onesti e laboriosi e sarete degni di lei."

The Froebelian who believes in learning by action will, of course, expect the children to make or write from the beginning as a method of learning, whether she begins with words or with sounds. But in English, unless simplified spelling is introduced, the time must soon come when reproduction must lag behind recognition. One child said with pathos one day, "May we spell as we like to-day, for I've got such a lot to say?"

The phonic method dates back to about 1530. The variety used in the Pestalozzi-Froebel House is said to have originated with Jacotot (1780–1840). It is called the "Observing-Speaking-Writing and Reading Method." Froebel's own adaptation was simpler; it was his principle to begin with a desire on the part of the child, and he gives his method in story form, "How Lina learned to write and read." Lina is six, she has left the Kindergarten and is presently to attend the Primary School. She notices with what pleasure her father, perhaps a somewhat exceptional parent, receives and answers letters. She desires to write and her mother makes her say her own name carefully, noticing first the "open" or vowel sounds and then by noting the position of her tongue she finds the closed sounds. As she hears the sound she is shown how to make it. Her father leaves home at the right moment, Lina writes to him, receives and is able to read his answer, printed like her own in Roman capitals. He sends her a picture book and she is helped to see how the letters resemble those she has learned and the reading is accomplished.

In England the phonic method best known is probably Miss Dale's. It is very ingenious, the analysis is thorough and the books are prettily got up, but to those who feel that reading, though a most valuable tool, still is but a tool and one not needed for children under seven, the method seems over-elaborate. Much depends upon the teacher

but to see fifty children sitting still while one child places the letters in their places on the board suggests a great deal of lost time. The system is also so rigidly phonic that it is a long time before a child can pick up an ordinary book with any profit.

Stanley Hall holds that it is best to combine methods, and probably most of us do this. "The growing agreement" is, he says, "that there is no one and only orthodox way of teaching and learning this greatest and hardest of all the arts, in which ear, mouth, eye and hand must each in turn train the others to automatic perfection, in ways hard and easy, by devices old and new, mechanically and consciously, actively and passively . . . this is a great gain and seems now secure. While a good pedagogic method is one of the most economic—both of labour and of money—of all inventions, we should never forget that the brightest children, and indeed most children, if taught individually or at home, need but very few refinements of method. Idiots, as Mr. Seguin first showed, need and profit greatly by very elaborated methods in learning how to walk, feed and dress themselves, which would only retard a normal child. Above all it should be borne in mind that the stated use of any method does not preclude the incidental use of any and perhaps of *all* others."

An adaptation of phonic combined with the word method can be found in *Education by Life*. It is simpler than Miss Dale's, and being combined with the word method, children get much more quickly to real stories. Stanley Hall advocates the individual teaching of reading, and since Dr. Montessori called every one's attention to this we have used it much more freely, and have found that once the children know some sounds, there is a great advantage in a certain amount of individual learning, but class teaching has its own advantages and it seems best to have a combination. Long since we taught a boy who

was mentally deficient and incapable of intelligent analysis, by whole words and corresponding pictures. Miss Payne has developed this to a great extent. It is practically an appeal to the interest in solving puzzles. The children choose their own pictures and are supplied with envelopes containing either single sounds, or whole words corresponding with the picture. They lay *h* on the house, *g* on the girl, *p* on the pond, and later do the same with words. They certainly enjoy it, and no one is ever kept waiting. Sometimes the puzzle is to set in order the words of a nursery rhyme which they already know, sometimes it is to read and draw everything mentioned.

It is not only how children learn to read that is important: even more so is what they read. Much unintelligent reading in later life is due to the reading primer in which there was nothing to understand. Children should read books, as adults do, to get something out of them. The time often wasted in teaching reading too soon would be far better employed in cultivating a taste for good reading by telling or reading to the children good stories and verses.[1]

A revolution is going on just now in the method of teaching writing. It is now generally recognised that much time and effort have been wasted in teaching children to join letters which are easier to read unjoined.

A very interesting article appeared in the Fielden School Demonstration Record No. II., and Mr. Graily Hewitt has brought the subject of writing as it was done before copperplate was invented very much to the fore. The Child Study Society has published a little monograph on the subject giving the experience of different teachers and specimens of the writing.

Little Marjorie Fleming was a voracious reader with a

[1] It is difficult to find easy material that is worth giving to intelligent children, and we have been glad to find Brown's *Young Artists' Readers*, Series A.

remarkable capacity for writing. Her spelling was unconventional at times, but there was never any doubt about her meaning. She expressed herself strongly on many subjects, and one of these was arithmetic. "I am now going to tell you the horrible and wretched plaege (plague) that my multiplication gives me you cant conceive it the most Devilish thing is 8 times 8 and 7 times 7 it is what nature itself cant endure." Yet "if you speak with the tongues of men and angels and make not mention of arithmetic it profiteth you nothing," says Miss Wiggin.

There are a few little childern who are really fond of number work. There are not many of them, and they would probably learn more if they were left to themselves. There are even a few mathematical geniuses who hardly want teaching, but who are worthy of being taught by a Professor of Mathematics, always supposing that he is worthy of them. But the majority of children would probably be farther advanced at ten or twelve if they had no teaching till they were seven. They ought to learn throngh actual number games, through keeping score for other games, and through any kind of calculation that is needed for construction or in real life.

There are but few true number games, but dominoes and card games introduce the number groups. In "Old maid" the children pair the groups and so learn to recognise them; in dominoes they use this knowledge, while "Snap" involves quick recognition. Any one can make up a game in which scoring is necessary. Ninepins or skittles is a number game, and one can score by using number groups, or by fetching counters, shells, beads, etc., as reminders. The number groups are important; they form what Miss Punnett calls "a scheme" for those who have no great visualising power, and they combine the smallest groups into large ones. It ought to be remembered that the repetition of a group is an easier thing to deal with than the combination of two

groups, that is, six is a name for two threes and eight for two fours, but five and seven have not so definite a meaning.[1]

The Tillich bricks are good playthings, and so is cardboard money—shillings, sixpences, threepences, pence and halfpence.

When the names have a meaning the children will want signs, *i.e.* figures. Clock figures (Roman) can be used first as simplest, showing the closed fingers and the thumb for V; the only difficulty is IX. The Arabic figures can be made by drawing round the number groups, or by laying out their shapes in little sticks. 5 and 8 show very plainly how to arrange five and eight sticks; for two and three they are placed horizontally, the curves merely joining the lines.

In teaching children to count, the decimal system should be kept well in mind, and the teacher should see that thirteen means three-ten, and that the children can touch the three and the ten as they speak the word. Eleven and twelve ought to be called oneteen and twoteen, half in joke. The idea of grouping should never be lost sight of, and larger numbers should at first be names for so many threes, fours, fives, etc. In order to keep the meaning clear the children should say threety, fourty and fivety, but there should be no need to write these numbers. The Kindergarten sticks tied in bundles of ten are quite convenient counting material when any counting is necessary. Tram tickets and cigarette pictures can be used in the same way.

The decimal notation is a great thing to learn, how great any one will discover who will take the trouble to work a simple addition sum, involving hundreds, in Roman figures. Children are always taught the number of the house they live in, which makes a starting-point. If, for instance, 35 is compared with XXXV a meaning is given to the 3.

Many teachers make formal sums of numbers which

[1] This very morning a child cutting out brown paper pennies for a shop said, 'Look! there are two sixes; that *would* be a big number!"

could quite well be added without any writing at all. By using any kind of material by which ten can be made plain as a higher unit — bundles of sticks or tickets, Sonnenschein's apparatus, Miss Punnett's number scheme, or the new Montessori apparatus with its chains of beads: the material used is of no great consequence—children should be able to deal as easily with tens as with ones, and there is no need for little formal sums which have no meaning.

Everything in daily life should be used before formal work is attempted. "Measure, reckon, weigh, compare," said Rousseau. Children love to measure, whether by lineal or liquid measure, or by learning to tell the time or to use a pair of scales.

There are a few occasions when interest is in actual number relations, as when a child for himself discovers that two sixes is six twos. One boy on his own account compared a shilling and an hour, and said that he could set out a shilling in five parts by the clock. He looked at the clock and chose out a sixpence, a threepence, and 3 pennies. But usually what is abstract belongs to a stage farther on.

So we can end where we began, by letting Froebel once more define the Kindergarten.

"Crèches and Infant Schools must be raised into Kindergartens wherein the child is treated and trained according to his whole nature, so that the claims of his body, his heart and his head, his active, moral and intellectual powers, are all satisfied and developed.

"Not the training of the memory, not learning by rote, not familiarity with the appearances of things, but culture by means of action, realities and life itself, bring a blessing upon the individual, and thereby a blessing upon the whole community; since each one, be he the highest or the humblest, is a member of the community."

PART II

THE CHILD IN THE STATE SCHOOL

I. THINGS AS THEY ARE

CHAPTER XIV

CERTAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF GROWTH

EARLY in the nineteenth century two men, moved by very different impulses, founded what might be considered the beginnings of the Infant School. For nearly fifty years their work grew separately, but now they are merged together into something that seems to be permanent.

In a bleak Lanarkshire factory village in the south of Scotland, Robert Owen, millowner, socialist and Welshman, found that unless he could provide for the education of the children of his factory hands, no parents would consent to settle in the district and he would be without workers in his mill. As a consequence Owen found himself in the position of education authority, privy purse and organiser, and he did not flinch from the situation; he imposed no cheap make-shift, because he believed in education as an end and not as an economic means; a twofold institution was therefore established by him in 1816, one part for the children of recognised school age, presumably over six, and one for those under school age, whose only entrance test was their ability to walk. It is with the latter that we are concerned.

The instructions given by Owen to the man and the

women he chose for his Infant School may serve to show his general aim; the babies under their care were above all to be happy, to lead a natural life, outdoor or indoor as weather permitted; learning their surroundings, playing, singing, dancing, "not annoyed with books," not shadowed by the needs of the upper school, but living the life their age demanded. In the light of the 1918 Education Bill this seems almost prophetic.

Their guardians were selected solely on the grounds of personality, and expected to work in the spirit in which Owen conceived the school. They were gentle, without personal ambition, fond of children, caring only for their welfare; but the sole guiding principle was Owen, and this was at once the success and doom of the school, for the personality of Owen was thus made the pivot round which the school revolved; without him there was nothing to take hold of.

Very soon the experiment became known: persons with the stamp of authority came to see it, and even official hearts were moved by the reality of the children's happiness and their consequent development. The visitors felt, rather than knew, that the thing was right. Arrangements were made to establish similar institutions in London, and after one or two experiments, a permanent one was founded which was under the control of a man named Wilderspin.

Wilderspin's contribution to education is difficult to estimate; certainly he never caught Owen's spirit, or realised his simple purpose: he had ambitions reaching beyond the happiness of the children; and far from trying to make their education suit their stage of growth, he sought to produce the "Infant Prodigy," just as a contemporary of his sought to produce the "Infant Saint." From what we can see, his aim was what he honestly believed to be right, as far as his light went; but he sought for no light beyond his own; and his outlook was not so

narrow as his application was unintelligent. Owen was still in Lanarkshire to be consulted; Rousseau had already written *Émile*, Pestalozzi's work was by this time fairly well known in England, the children were there to be studied, but Wilderspin pursued his limited and unenlightened work, until the Infant School was almost a dead thing in his hands and in the hands of those who followed. The following is Birchenough's account:

"The school was in charge of a master and a female assistant, presumably his wife. Much attention was given to training children in good personal habits, cleanliness, tidiness, punctuality, etc., and to moral training. Great stress was laid on information. . . . The curriculum included reading, writing, arithmetic, geometry, lessons on common objects, geography, singing and religion, and an effort was made to make the work interesting and 'concrete.' To this end much importance was attached to object-lessons, to the use of illustrations, to questioning and exposition, while the memory was aided by means of didactic verse. . . . The real teaching devolved upon the master and mistress. This was of two kinds: class teaching to a section of the children of approximately equal attainments either on the floor or in the class-room, and collective teaching to the whole school, regardless of age, on the gallery."

It is a curious coincidence that in 1816, the year of Owen's experiment, a humble educational experiment was begun by Frederick Froebel in a very small village in the heart of the Thuringian forest. Like Owen, his aim was education solely for its own sake, and he had a simple faith in the human goodness of the older Germany. But he came to education as a philosopher rather than a social reformer, with a strong belief in its power to improve humanity. This belief remained with him; it is embodied in his aim, and leavened all his work.

The first twenty years of his experience convinced Froebel that the neglect or mismanagement of the earliest years of a child's life rendered useless all that was done later. What came to Owen as an inspiration grew in Froebel to be a reasoned truth, and like Owen he put it into practice. In 1837 the little Kindergarten at Blankenburg was begun, with the village children as pupils; the beautiful surroundings of forest-covered hills and green slopes made a very different background from the bleak little Lanarkshire village, overshadowed by the factory, where Owen's school stood, but the spirit was the same; the children were in surroundings suitable for their growth, and the very name of Kindergarten does more to make Froebel's aim clear than any explanation. He lived to see other Kindergartens established in different parts of Thuringia, and about the middle of the nineteenth century some of his teachers came to England, and did similar work in London, Croydon and Manchester. The private Kindergarten became an established thing, and educationalists came to understand something of its meaning.

In 1870 the London School Board suggested that the Kindergarten system should be introduced into their Infant Schools, and in doing so they were unconsciously the factors in bringing together the work initiated by Owen and by Froebel. The Infant School of Wilderspin, already briefly described, was almost a dead thing, with its galleries and its mechanical prodigies, its object-lessons and its theology; now it was breathed upon by the spirit of the man who said: "Play is the highest phase of child development, of human development at this period: for it is the spontaneous representation of the inner, from inner necessity and impulse." "Play is the purest, most spiritual activity of man." "The plays of childhood are the germinal leaves of all later life." "If the child is injured at this period, if the germinal leaves of the future tree of his life are marred

at this time, he will only with the greatest difficulty and the utmost effort grow into strong manhood."

It is perhaps not altogether to be wondered at that teachers at first seized the apparatus rather than the spirit of the Kindergarten when we remember that we have not accepted in anything like its fulness the teaching of Froebel. Formalism and materialism always die slowly: play in the Board School was interpreted as something that had to be dictated and taught: the gifts, occupations and games were organised, and appeared on the time-table as subjects side by side with Wilderspin's theology and object-lessons. The combination must have been curious, but even with its formalism the change was welcome to the children: at least they could use their hands and do something; at least they could leave their back-breaking galleries and dance and skip, even though the doing and the dancing were according to strict rule.

The change was not welcome to all teachers. As late as 1907 a headmistress who was a product of the training of that time remarked: "We have Kindergarten on Wednesday afternoons and then it is over for the week." But there were teachers who saw beneath the bricks and sticks and pretty movements, who felt the spiritual side and kept themselves alive till greater opportunities came. What was imperishable has remained; the system of prescribed activities is nearly dead, but the spirit of the true Kindergarten is more alive than ever.

The change from the early 'eighties till now is difficult to describe, because it is a growth of spirit, a gradual change of values, rather than a change in outward form; there has been no definite throwing off, and no definite adoption, of any one system or theory; but the difference between the best Infant Schools of 1880 and the best Infant Schools of to-day is chiefly a difference in outlook. The older schools aimed at copying a method, while the

schools of to-day are more concerned with realising the spirit.

At present we are trying to reconstruct education for the new world after the war, and so it is convenient to regard the intervening period of nearly half a century as a transition period: during that time the education of the child under eight has changed much more than the education of older children, at least in the elementary school; and there have been certain marked phases that, though apparently insignificant in themselves, have marked stages of progress in thought.

Perhaps the most significant and most important of these was the effect of the child-study movement on the formal and external side of Kindergarten work. It is first of all to America that we owe this, to the pioneer Stanley Hall, and more especially here to Mr. Earl Barnes. Very slowly, but surely, it was evident to the more enlightened teachers that children had their own way of learning and doing, and the adult-imposed system meant working against nature. For the logical method of presenting material from the simple to the complex, from the known to the unknown, from the concrete to the abstract, was substituted the psychological method of watching the children's way of learning and developing. Teachers found that what they considered to be "the simple" was not the simple to children; what they took to be "the known" was the unfamiliar to children. For instance, the "simple" in geography, in the adult sense, was the definition of an island, with which most of us began that study, and in geometry it was the point. To children of the ordinary type, both are far-away ideas, and not related to everyday experiences; "the known" in arithmetic, for example, was to teachers the previous lesson, quite regardless of the fact that arithmetic enters into many problems of life outside school. The life in school and the life outside school were, in these early

days of infant teaching, two separate things, and only occasionally did a teacher stoop to take an example from everyday life. A little girl in one of the poorest schools brought her baby to show her teacher, and proudly displayed the baby's powers of speech—"Say a pint of 'alf-an-'alf for teacher," said the little girl to the baby by way of encouragement to both. This is the kind of rude awakening teachers get, from time to time, when they realise how much of the real child eludes them. Psychology has made it clear that life is a unity and must be so regarded.

Part of this child-study movement has resulted in the slow but sure death of formalism: large classes, material results, and a lack of psychology made formalism the path of least resistance. Painting became "blobbing," constructive work was interpreted as "courses" of paper folding, cutting, tearing; books of these courses were published with minute directions for a graduated sequence. The aim was obedient imitation on the part of the child, and the imagined virtues accruing to him in consequence were good habits, patience, accuracy and technical skill. Self-expression and creativeness were still only theories.

A second interesting phase of the transition period was the method adopted for the training of the senses. From the days of Comenius till now the importance of this has held its place firmly, but the means have greatly changed. Pestalozzi's object-lesson was adopted by Wilderspin and thoroughly sterilised; many teachers still remember the lessons on the orange, leather, camphor, paper, sugar, in which the teacher's senses were trained, for only she came in contact with the object, and the children from their galleries answered questions on an object remote from most of their senses, and only dimly visible to their eyes. Similar lessons were given after 1870 on Froebel's gift II. in which the ball, cylinder and cube were treated in the same manner: progress was slow, but sometimes the children

followed nature's promptings and played with their specimens; this was followed by books of "gift-plays," where organised play took the place of organised observation.

About 1890 or thereabouts the Nature Study movement swept over the schools, and "nature specimens" then became the material for sense training: as far as possible each child had a specimen, and by the minute examination of these, stimulated their senses and stifled their appreciation of all that was beautiful.

Question and answer still dominated the activity; the poor little withered snowdrop took the place of the dead camphor or leather. But underlying all the paralysing organisation the truth was slowly growing, and the children were being brought nearer to real things.

A third phase in this transition period is that known as "correlation"; most teachers remember the elaborate programmes of work that drove them to extremes in finding "connections." The following, taken from a reputable book of the time, will exemplify the principle:

A Week's Programme

Object Lesson	The Horse.
Phonetics	The Foal, *oa* sound.
Number	Problems on the work of horses.
Story	The Bell of Atri [story of a horse ringing a bell].
Song	Busy Blacksmith [shoeing a horse].
Game	The Blacksmith's Shop.
Reading	On the Horse.
Poetry	Kindness to Animals.
Paper Cutting	The Bell of Atri.
Paper Folding	A Trough.
Free-arm Drawing	A Horseshoe.
Clay Modelling	A Carrot for the Horse.
Brushwork	A Turnip for the Horse.
Brown Paper Drawing	A Stable.

Underneath it all the truth was growing, namely, the need of making associations and so unifying the children's lines. But the process of finding the truth was slow and cumbersome.

A fourth phase of the early Infant School was the strong belief of both teachers and inspectors in uniformity of work and of results. It is difficult to disentangle this from the paralysing influences of payment by results and large classes: it was probably the teachers' unconscious expression of the instinct of self-preservation, when working against the heaviest odds. But it was constantly evident to the teacher that any attempt on a child's part to be an individual, either in work or in conduct, had to be arrested: and the theory of individual development was regarded as so Utopian that the idea itself was lost. Goodness was synonymous with uniform obedience and silence; naughtiness with individuality, spontaneity and desire to investigate. A frequently-heard admonition on the part of the teacher was, "Teacher didn't tell you to do it that way—that's a naughty way"; but such an attitude of mind was doubtless generated by the report of the inspector when he commended a class by saying: "The work of the class showed a satisfactory uniformity."

To obtain uniform results practice had to come before actual performance, and many weary hours were spent over drill in reading, drill in number, drill in handwork, drill in needlework. The extreme point was reached when babies of three had thimble and needle drill long before they began needlework. There were also conduct drills; Miss Grant, of Devons Road School, remembers a school where the babies "practised" their conduct before the visit of the "spectre," as they called him, he being represented as a stick set up on a chair. There is a curious symbolism in the whole occasion.

It is difficult to see the good underlying this phase, but

it was there. There is undoubtedly a place for practice, though not before performance, and uniformity was undoubtedly the germ of an ideal.

All these phases stand for both progress and arrest. The average person is readier to accept methods than investigate principles; but we must recognise that all struggles and searchings after truth have made the road of progress shorter for us by many a mile.

Perhaps the chief cause of stumbling lay in the fact that there was no clearly realised aim or policy except that of material results. There were many fine-sounding principles in the air, but they were unrelated to each other; and the conditions of teaching were likely to crush the finest endeavours, and to make impossible a teaching that could be called educative.

CHAPTER XV

THE INFANT SCHOOL OF TO-DAY

TAKING neither the best nor the worst, but the average school of to-day, it will be profitable to review shortly where it stands, to consider how far it has learnt the lessons of experience, and what kind of ideal it has set before itself.

In externals there have been many improvements. Modern buildings are better in many ways; there is more space and light, and the surroundings are more attractive. Most of the galleries have disappeared, but the furniture consists chiefly of dual desks, fixed and heavy, so that the arrangement of the room cannot be changed. The impression given to a visitor is that it is planned for listening and answering, except in the Baby Room, where there are generally light tables and chairs, and consequently no monotonous rows of children, unless a teacher arranges them thus from sheer habit. In each room is a high narrow cupboard about one quarter of the necessary size for all that education demands; most education authorities provide some good pictures, but the best are usually hung on the class-room wall behind the children, and all are above the children's eye level. "Oh, teacher, my neck do ache!" was the only appreciative remark made by a child after a tour made of the school pictures, which were really beautiful.

As a rule the windows are too high for the children to

see from, and the lower part is generally frosted. In a new school which had a view up one of the loveliest valleys in Great Britain, the windows were of this description; the head of the school explained that it was a precaution in case the children might see what was outside; in other words, they might make the mistake of seeing a real river valley instead of listening to a description of it.

In country schools of the older type the accommodation is not so good, but the newer ones are often very attractive in appearance, and have both space and light. The school garden is a common feature in the country, and it is to be regretted so few even of the plot description are to be found in town schools.

Of late years the apparatus has improved, though there is still much to be done in this direction. Instead of the original tiny boxes of gifts we have frequently real nursery bricks of a larger and more varied character, and many other nursery toys. One of the best signs of a progressive policy is that large numbers of *little* toys have taken the place of the big expensive ones that only an occasional child could use. It is a pity that the use of toys comes to so sudden an end, and that learning by this method does not follow the babies after they have officially ceased to be babies, as is the custom in real life.

One of the most striking changes for the better is the evidence of care of the children's health, of which some of the external signs are doctor, nurse and care committee. A sense of responsibility in this respect is gradually growing in the schools; a fair number provide for sleep, a few try to train the children to eat lunch slowly and carefully, and some try to arrange for milk or cod-liver oil in the case of very delicate children. Though these instances are very much in the minority, they represent a change of spirit. This is one of the striking characteristics of the new Education Bill.

A legacy from the old formalism lies in the fact that every room has a highly organised time-table, except perhaps in the Babies' Room, where the children's actual needs are sometimes considered first. The morning in most classes is occupied with Scripture, Reading, Arithmetic, Writing, and some less formal work, such as Nature lesson or Recitation; some form of Physical Exercise is always taken. The afternoons are mostly devoted to Games, Stories, Handwork and Singing: this order is not universal, but the general principle holds, of taking the more difficult and formal subjects in the morning. In the Babies' Room some preparation for reading is still too frequent. The lessons are short and the order varied, but in one single morning or afternoon there is a bewildering number of changes. Some years ago the unfortunate principle was laid down in the Code, that fifteen minutes was sufficient time for a lesson in an Infant School, and though this is not strictly followed the lessons are short and numerous, giving an unsettled character to the work; children appear to be swung at a moment's notice from topic to topic without an apparent link or reason: for example, the day's work may begin with the story of a little boy sent by train to the country, settled at a farm and taken out to see the *cow* and the *sow*: soon this is found to be a reading lesson on words ending in "ow," but after a short time the whole class is told quite suddenly, that one shilling is to be spent at a shop in town, and while they are still interested in calculating the change, paints are distributed, and the children are painting the bluebell. The whole day is apt to be of this broken character, which certainly does not make for training in mental concentration, or for a realisation of the unity of life. Some teachers still aim at correlation, but in a rather half-hearted way: others have entirely discarded it because of its strained applications, but nothing very definite has taken its place.

The curriculum which has been given is varied in character, and sometimes includes a "free period." Except in the Babies' Class the three R's occupy a prominent place, and children under six spend relatively a great deal of time in formal subjects, while children between six and seven, if they are still in the Infant School, are taught to put down sums on paper, which they could nearly always calculate without such help. As soon as a child can read well, and work a fair number of sums on paper, he is considered fit for promotion, and the question of whether he understands the method of working such sums, is not considered so important as accuracy and quickness. The test of so-called intelligence for promotion is reading and number, but it is really the test of convenience, so that large numbers of children may be taught together and brought, against the laws of nature, to a uniform standard.

This poison of the promotion and uniformity test works down through the Infant School: it can be seen when the babies are diverted from their natural activities to learn reading, or when they are "examined": it can be seen when a teacher yields up her "bright" children to fill a few empty desks, it can be seen in the grind at reading and formal arithmetic of the children under six, when weary and useless hours are spent in working against nature, and precious time is wasted that will never come back. Yet we *say* we believe that "Children have their youth that they may play," and that "Play is the purest, most spiritual activity of man at this stage" [childhood].

The lack of any clear aim shows itself in the fluid nature of the term "results"; to some teachers it signifies readiness for promotion, or a piece of work that presents a satisfactory external appearance, such as good writing, neat handwork, an orderly game, fluent reading. To others it means something deeper, which they discover in some chance remark of a child's that marks the growth of the

spirit, or the awakening of the interest of a child whose development is late, or the quickened power of a child to express; or evidence of independent thought and the power to use it, in some piece of handwork, or appreciation of music or literature. According to the meaning attached to the term "results" so the method of the teacher must vary; but one gets the general impression that in this respect matters are in a transitional state; the first kind of teacher is always a little uncertain of her ground and a little fearful that she is not quite "up-to-date," while the second class of teacher is sometimes a little timid, and not quite sure that she is prepared to account for the rather subtle and intangible outcome of her work.

The same transitional character holds in the case of discipline: while what is known as "military" discipline still prevails in many schools, there are a very fair number with whom the grip has relaxed; but it is a courageous teacher that will admit the term "free discipline" which has nearly as bad a reputation as "free thought" used to have, and few are prepared to go all the way. Probably the reason lies in the vagueness of the meaning of the term, and the fact that its value is not clearly realised because it is not clearly understood. Teachers have not faced the question squarely: "What am I aiming at in promoting free discipline."

Taking a general view of the present school, one gets the impression of a constant change of activity on the part of the children, but very little change of position, a good deal of provision for general class interest, but little for individual interest; of less demand than formerly for uniformity of results, but the existence of a good deal of uniformity of method, arresting the teacher's own initiative; of very constant teaching on the part of the teacher and a good deal of listening and oral expression on the part of the children, of many lessons and little independent individual work.

Below all this there is evident a very friendly relationship between the teacher and the children, a good deal of personal knowledge of the children on the part of the teacher, and a good deal of affection on both sides. There is less fear and more love than in the earlier days, less government and more training, less restraint and more freedom. And the children are greatly attached to their school.

From consideration of the foregoing summary it will be seen that education in the Infant School is a thing of curious patches, of strength and weakness, of light and shade; perhaps the greatest weakness is its lack of cohesion, of unification: on the one hand we find much provision for the children's real needs, much singleness of purpose in the teacher's work, such a genuine spirit of whole-hearted desire for their education: on the other hand, an unreasoning sense of haste, of pushing on, of introducing prematurely work for which the children admittedly are unready; an acceptance of new things on popular report, without scientific basis, and a lack of courage to maintain the truth for its own sake, in the face of so-called authority, and a craving to be modern. At the root of all this inconsistency and possibly its cause, is the lack of a guiding policy or aim, the lack of belief in the scientific or psychological basis of education, and consequently the want of that strong belief in absolute truth which helps the teacher to pass all barriers.

CHAPTER XVI

SOME VITAL PRINCIPLES

If it be true that the Infant School of to-day suffers from lack of a clear basis for its general policy, it will be profitable to have clearly before us such principles as great educators have found to be most vital to the education of young children.

We all believe that we have an aim and a high aim before us: it has been variously expressed by past educationalists, but in the main they all agree that the aim of education is conduct.

In actual practice, however, we act too often as if we only cared for economic values. If we are to live up to our educational profession, we must look our aim in the face and honestly practise what we believe.

While training of character and conduct is the accepted aim for education in general, to make this useful and practical each teacher must fix her attention on how this ultimate aim affects her own special part of the whole work. By watching the free child she will discover how best she can help him: he knows his own business, and when unfettered by advice or command shows plainly that he is chiefly concerned with *gaining experience.* He finds himself in what is to him a new and complex world of people and things; actual experience is the foundation for complete living, and the stronger the foundation the better the result of later building.

The first vital principle then is that the teacher of young children must provide life in miniature; that is, she must provide abundant raw material and opportunities for experience.

The next question is that of the best method of gaining this actual experience. The child is unaware that he is laying foundations, he is only vaguely conscious that he finds great pleasure in certain activities, and that something impels him in certain directions. He realises no definite future, he is content with the present; he cannot work for a purpose other than the pleasure of the moment; without this stimulus concentration is impossible. In the activities of this stage he probably assimilates more actual matter than at any other period of his life, and it is the same with his acquirements of skill. In happy unconsciousness he gains knowledge of his own body and of its power, of the external world, of his mother tongue and of his relations to other people: he makes mistakes and commits faults, but these do not necessarily cripple or incriminate him. He is not considered a social outcast because he once kicked or bit, or because he threw his milk over the table; he learns to balance and adjust his muscles on a seesaw, when a fall on soft grass is a matter of little importance, and this is better than waiting till he is compelled hastily to cross a river on a narrow plank. It is all a kind of joyous rehearsal of life which we call Play. We can force a child to passivity, to formal repetitions of second-hand knowledge, to the acquisition of that for which he has no apparent need, but we can never *educate* him by these things. "Children do not play because they are young, they have their youth that they may play," as surely as they have their legs that they may walk.

The second principle is therefore that the method of gaining experience lies through Play, and that by this road we can best reach work.

The third principle is the nature of the experience that a child seeks to gain—the life he desires to live. How can we be sure that the surroundings we provide and the activities we encourage are in accord with children's needs?

Let us imagine a child of about five to six years of age, one of a family, living in a small house to which a garden is attached; inside he has the run of the house, but keeps his own toys, picture books and collections of treasures. We will suppose that not being at school he is free to arrange his own day, sometimes alone, and sometimes with other children, or with his parents. What does he do?

He is interested in inanimate things, especially in using them, and so he plays with his toys. He builds bricks, runs engines, solves simple puzzle pictures, asks to work with his father's gardening tools, or his mother's cooking utensils. He is interested in the life of the garden, in the growing things, in the snail or spider he finds, in the cat, dog or rabbit of the family; he wants to dig, water and feed these various things, but he declines regular responsibility; his interest is in spurts.

He is interested in sounds, both in those he can produce and in those produced by others: soon he is interested in music, he will listen to it for considerable periods, and may join in it: at first more especially on the rhythmical side. So, too, he likes the rhythm of poetry and the melody sounds of words. He is interested in making things; on a wet day he will ask for scissors and paste, or bring out his paint box or chalks; on a fine day he mixes sand or mud with water, or builds a shelter with poles and shawls; at any time when he has an opportunity he shuts himself into the bathroom and experiments with the taps, sails boats, colours water, blows bubbles, tries to mix things, wet and dry.

He is interested in the doings of other people, in their conduct and in his own; he is more interested in their

badness than in their goodness: "Tell me more of the bad things your children do," said a little boy to his teacher aunt, and the request is significant and general; we learn so little by mere uncontrasted goodness. He is interested in the words that clothe narrations and in their style, he is impatient of a change in form of an accepted piece of prose or poetry. He is hungry for the sounds of telling words and phrases.

He is interested in reproducing the doings of other people so that he may experience them more fully, and this involves minute observation, careful and intelligent imitation, and vivid imagination. His own word for it is pretence.

There are other things that he grasps at more vaguely and later; he is dimly aware that people have lived before, and he is less dimly aware that people live in places different from his own surroundings. He realises that some of the stories, such as the fairy stories, are true in one sense, a sense that responds to something within himself; that some are true in another more material and external sense, one concerned with things that really happen. He hears of "black men," and of "ships that carry people across the sea," and of "things that come back in those ships."

He is interested in the immaterial world suggested by the mysteries of woods and gardens, he has a dim conception that there is some life beyond the visible, he feels a power behind life and he reveals this in his early questions. He is keenly interested in questions of birth and death, and sometimes comes into close contact with them. He feels that other wonders must be accounted for—the snow, thunder and lightning, the colours of summer, the changeful sea. At first the world of fairy lore may satisfy him, later comes the life of the undying spirit, but the two are continuous. He may attend "religious observances," and these may help or they may hinder.

He is keenly interested in games, whether they are games

of physical skill, of mental skill, or games of pretence. Here most especially he comes into contact with other people, and here he realises some of the experiences of social life.

Such are the most usual sides of life sought by the ordinary child, and on such must we base the surroundings we provide for our children in school, and the aspects of life to which we introduce them, commonly called subjects of the curriculum.

Our third principle is therefore evident: we find, in the child's spontaneous choice, the nature of the surroundings and of the activities that he craves for; in other words, he makes his own curriculum and selects his own subject matter.

The next consideration is the atmosphere in which a child can best develop character by means of these experiences. A young child is a stranger in an unknown, untried country: he has many strange promptings that seek for satisfaction; he has strong emotions arising from his instincts, he feels crudely and fiercely and he must act without delay, as a result of these emotions. He is like a tourist in a new strange country, fresh and eager, and with a similar holiday spirit of adventure: the stimulation of the new arouses a desire to interpret, to investigate and to ask questions: it arouses strong emotions to like or dislike, to fear, to be curious; it leads to certain modes of conduct, as a result of these emotions. Picture such a young tourist buttonholed by a blasé guide, who had forgotten what first impressions meant, who insisted on accompanying him wherever he went, regulating his procedure by telling him just what should be observed and how to do so, pouring out information so premature as to be obnoxious, correcting his taste, subduing his enthusiasm, and modifying even his behaviour. The tourist would presumably pay off the unwelcome guide, but the children cannot pay off the teacher: they can and do rebel, but docility and adaptability seem to play a large

part in self-preservation. For the young child freedom must precede docility, because the only reasonable and profitable docility is one that comes after initiative and experiment have been satisfied, and when the child feels that he needs help.

The world that the free child chooses represents every side of life that he is ready to assimilate, and his freedom must be intellectual, emotional and moral freedom. In the school with the rigidly organised time-table, where the remarks of the children provoke the constantly repeated reproach: "We are not talking of that just now," where the apparatus is formal and the method of using it prescribed, where home life and street life are ignored, where there are neither garden nor picture books, where childish questions are passed over or hastily answered, where the room is full of desks and the normal attitude is sitting, where the teacher is teaching more often than the children are doing, there is no intellectual freedom.

Where passion and excitement are instantly arrested, where appreciation for strong colours, fierce punishments, loud noises, is killed, where fear is ridiculed, where primitive likes and dislikes are interpreted as coarseness, there is no emotional freedom. A child must have these experiences if he is to come to his own later: this is not the time to stamp out but only to deflect and guide; otherwise he becomes a weak and pale reflection of his elders, with little resource or enthusiasm.

Where it is almost impossible to be openly naughty, where there is no opportunity for choice or for making mistakes, where control is all from the teacher and self-control has no place, there is no moral freedom. The school is not for the righteous but for the so-called sinner, who is only a child learning self-control by experience.

Self-control is a habit gained through habits; a child must acquire the habit of arresting desire, of holding the physical side in check, the habit of reflection, of choice, and

most of all the habit of either acting or holding back, as a result of all this. If in the earliest years his will is in the hands of others, and he has the habit of obedience to the exclusion of all other habits, then his development as a self-reliant individual is arrested, and may be permanently weakened. There is no other way to learn life, and build up an ideal from the raw material he has gained in other ways. In the rehearsal of life at school he can do this without serious harm; but every time a mode of conduct is imposed upon him when he might have chosen, every time he is externally controlled when he might have controlled himself, every time he is balked in making a mistake that would have been experience to him, he will be proportionally less fit to choose, to exercise self-control, to learn by experience, and these are the chief lessons at this impressionable period.

The fourth principle therefore is that the atmosphere of freedom is the only atmosphere in which a child can gain experiences that will help to develop character and control conduct.

These four vital principles will be applied to practical work in the following chapters.

II. PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF VITAL PRINCIPLES

BEFORE applying these principles it is necessary for practical considerations to set out clearly the various stages of this period. During the first eight years of life, development is very rapid and not always relatively continuous. Sometimes it takes leaps, and sometimes appears for a time to be quiescent. But roughly the first stage of a child's developing life ends when he can walk, eat more or less ordinary food, and is independent of his mother. At this point the Nursery School stage begins: the child is learning for himself his world by experience, and through play he chooses his raw material in an atmosphere of freedom. When the period of play pure and simple begins to grow into a desire to do things better, to learn and practise for a more remote end—in other words, when the child begins to be willing to be taught, the transitional period from play to work begins. It can never be said to end, but the relative amount of play to work gradually defines the life of the school: and so the transitional period merges into the school period. Thus we are concerned first with the Nursery School period which corresponds to what Froebel meant by his Kindergarten and Owen by his Infant School; secondly, with the transitional period which has been far too long neglected or rushed over, and which roughly corresponds to the Standard I. of the Elementary School; and thirdly, we have the beginnings of the Junior School where work is the predominant factor. In spite of Shakespeare's assertion, there is much in a name,

and if these names were definitely adopted, teachers would realise better the nature of their business.

The following chapters seek to apply practically the four vital principles to these periods of a child's life, but in many cases the Transition Classes and the Junior School are considered together.

CHAPTER XVII

THE NEED FOR EXPERIENCE

"The first vital principle is that the teacher of young children must provide for them life in miniature, *i.e.* she must provide abundant raw material and opportunities for acquiring experience."

THE practical translation of this in the words of the teacher of to-day is, "I must choose furniture, and requisition apparatus." The teacher of to-morrow will say to her children, "I will bring the world into the school for you to learn." The Local Education Authority of to-day says, "We must build a school for instruction." The Local Education Authority of to-morrow will say, "We must make a miniature world for our children."

The world of the Nursery School child probably requires the most careful thought in this respect: a large room with sunlight and air, low clear windows, a door leading to a garden and playground, low cupboards full of toys, low-hung pictures, light chairs and tables that can be pushed into a corner, stretcher beds equally disposable, a dresser with pretty utensils for food; these are the chief requirements for satisfying physical needs, apparent in the actual room. Physical habits will be considered later, under another heading.

Outside, in the playground, there should be opportunities for physical development, for its own sake: swings, giant

strides, ladders laid flat, slightly sloping planks, and a see-saw should all be available for constant use; if the children are not warned or given constant advice about their own safety, there is little fear of accidents.

Thus the purely physical side of the children is provided for, the side that they are, if healthy, quite unconscious of; what else does experience demand at this stage?

Roughly classified, the raw experience of this stage may be divided into the experience of the natural world of living things, the world of inanimate things, and the social world. For the natural world there should be the garden outside, with its trees, grass and flower beds; with its dovecot and rabbit hutch, and possibly a cat sunning herself on its paths; inside there will be plants and flowers to care for; the elements, especially water, earth and air, are very dear to a young child, and it is quite possible to satisfy his cravings with a large sand-heap of *dry* and *wet* sand; a large flat bath for sailing boats and testing the theory of sinking and floating; a bin of clay; a pair of bellows and several fans to set the air in motion. There is always the fire to gaze at on the right side of the fire-guard, and appreciation of the beauty of this element should be encouraged.

The world of inanimate things includes most of the toys that stimulate activity and give ideas. The chief that should be found in the cupboards, round the walls, or scattered about the room, are bricks of all sizes and shapes, skittles, balls and bats or rackets, hoops, reins, spades and other garden tools; pails and patty pans for the sand-heap; pipes for bubbles, shells, fir-cones, buttons, acorns, and any collection of small articles for handling; all kinds of vehicles that can be pushed, such as carts, barrows, prams, engines; drums and other musical instruments; materials for construction and expression, such as chalks, boards, paints and paper.

For experiences of the social world, which is not very

real at this individualistic period, come the dolls and doll's house, horses and stables, tea-things, cooking utensils, Noah's ark, scales for a shop, boats, soldiers and forts: a very important item in this connection is the collection of picture-books: they must be chosen with the greatest care, and only pictures of such merit as those of Caldecott, Leslie Brooke and Jessie Wilcox Smith should be selected. Pictures form one of the richest sources of experience at this stage, as indeed at any stage of life, and truth, beauty and suggestiveness must be their chief factors.

The toys should be above all things durable, and if possible washable. Broken and dirty toys make immoral children.

Besides the material surroundings there are opportunities, the seizing of which gives valuable experiences. These belong to the social world, and lie chiefly in the training in life's social observances and the development of good habits. This side of life is one of the most important in the Nursery School, and needs material help. The lavatories and cloak-rooms should be constructed so that there is every chance for a child to become self-reliant and fastidious. The cloak-rooms should be provided with low pegs, boot holes, clothes brushes and shoe brushes: there should be low basins with hot and cold water, enamel mugs and tooth brushes *for each child*, nail brushes, plenty of towels, and where the district needs it, baths. The type provided by the Middlesex Education Authority at Greenford Avenue School, Hanwell, gives a shower bath to a whole group of children at once, thus making a more frequent bath possible. Perhaps for very small children of the Nursery School age separate baths are more suitable. This is a question for future experience on the part of teachers. There should be plenty of time for the children to learn to wash and dress themselves.

In the school-room there should either be tablecloths, or the tables should be capable of being scrubbed by the children after each meal. Their almost inevitable lack of

manners at table gives an invaluable opportunity for training, and again in such a case there should be no question of haste. The meals should be laid, waited on and cleared away, and the dishes washed by the children themselves, and they should be responsible for the general tidiness of the room. This involves tea-cloths, mops, dusters, washing bowls, brushes and dustpans.

In the Transition Classes and Junior School the furniture and apparatus can be to a great extent very much the same, their difference lying chiefly in degree. It is a pity to bring the age of toys to an abrupt conclusion; in real life the older children still borrow the toys of the younger ones while there are some definitely their own: such are, jigsaw and other puzzles, dominoes, articles for dramatic representation, playing cards, toys for games of physical skill, such as tops, kites, skipping ropes, etc. Such prepared constructive materials as meccano—and a great mass of raw material for construction, generally termed "waste." There should be a series of boxes or shelves where such waste products of the home, or of the woods, or of the seashore, or of the shop, might be stored in some classified order: the collective instinct is stronger than the more civilised habit of orderliness: here is an opportunity for developing a habit from an instinct. There should also be materials for expression, such as clay, paper, chalk, pencil, paints, weaving materials, cardboard, and scenery materials; and such tools as scissors, cardboard knives, needlework tools, paste brushes, and others that may be necessary and suitable. The rooms should be large and suitable for much moving about: the most usual conditions should be a scattered class and not a seated listening class. This means light chairs and tables or benches where handwork can be done; low cupboards and lockers so that each child can get at his own things; broad window-sills for plants

and flowers and a bookcase for reading and picture books. Here again good picture-books are as essential as, even more essential than, readers in the Transition Class. They will be a little more advanced than in the Nursery School, and will be of the type of the Pied Piper illustrated, or pictures of children of other lands and times. Some of Rackham's, of Harold Copping's, of the publications by Black in *Peeps at Many Lands*, are suitable for this stage. Readers should be chosen for their literary value from the recognised children's classics, such as the Peter Rabbit type, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Water-Babies*, and not made up for the sake of reading practice.

The pictures on the walls should be hung at the right eye-level, and the windows low enough for looking at the outside world—whatever it may be. The teacher's desk should be in a corner, not in the central part of the room, for she must remember that the children are still in the main seeking experience, not listening to the experience of another. They should have access to the garden and playground, and all the incitements to activity should be there—similar to those of the Nursery School, or those provided by the London County Council in parks. The bare wilderness of playground now so familiar, where there is neither time nor opportunity for children to be other than primitive savages, does not represent the outside world of beauty and of adventure.

The lower classes of Junior School should differ very little in their miniature world. Life is still activity to the child of eight, and consequently should contain no immovable furniture. There will be more books, and the children may be in their seats for longer periods; the atmosphere of guided but still spontaneous work is more definite, but the aim in choice of both furniture and apparatus is still the gaining of experience of life, by direct contact in the main.

Such is the Requisition Sheet to be presented to the Stores Superintendent of the Local Education Authority in the future, with an explanatory note stating that in a general way what is actually required is the world in miniature!

CHAPTER XVIII

GAINING EXPERIENCE BY PLAY

"The Second Principle is that the method of gaining experience lies through Play and that by this road we can best reach work."

PLAY is marked off from work chiefly by the absence of any outside pressure, and pleasure in the activity is the characteristic of play pure and simple: if a child has forced upon him a hint of any ulterior motive that may be in the mind of his teacher, the pleasure is spoilt for him and the intrinsic value of the play is lost. In bringing children into school during their play period, probably the most important formative period of their lives, and in utilising their play consciously, we are interfering with one of their most precious possessions when they are still too helpless to resent it directly. Too many of us make play a means of concealing the wholesome but unwelcome morsel of information in jam, and we try to force it on the children prematurely and surreptitiously, but Nature generally defeats us. The only sound thing to do is to *play the game* for all it is worth, and recognise that in doing so education will look after itself. To understand the nature of play, and to have the courage to follow it, is the business of every teacher of young children. The Nursery School, especially if it consists chiefly of children under five, presents at first very hard problems to the teacher; however strong her belief in play may be, it receives severe

tests. So much of the play at first seems to be aimless running and shouting, or throwing about of toys and breaking them if possible, so much quarrelling and fighting and weeping seem involved with any attempts at social life on the part of the children; there seems very little desire to co-operate, and very little desire to construct; as a rule, a child roams from one thing to another with apparently only a fleeting attempt to play with it; yet on the other hand, to make the problem more baffling, a child will spend a whole morning at one thing: quite lately one child announced that he meant to play with water all day, and he did; another never left the sand-heap, and apparently repeated the same kind of activity during a complete morning; visitors said in a rather disappointed tone, "they just play all the time by themselves." One teacher brought out an attractive picture and when a group of children gathered round it she proceeded to tell the story; they listened politely for a few minutes, and then the group gradually melted away; they were not ready for concentrated effort. If those children had been in the ordinary Baby Room of a school they would have been quite docile, sitting in their places apparently listening to the story, amiably "using" their bricks or other materials according to the teacher's directions, but they would not, in the real sense, have been playing. This is an example of the need for both principle and courage.

It is into this chaotic method of gaining experience that the teacher comes with her interpretive power—she sees in it the beginnings of all the big things of life—and like a bigger child she joins, and like a bigger child she improves. She sees in the apparent chaos an attempt to get experience of the different aspects of life, in the apparently aimless activity an attempt to realise and develop the bodily powers, in the fighting and quarrelling an attempt to establish a place in social life. It is all

unconscious on the part of a child, but a necessary phase of real development.

Gradually the little primitive man begins to yield to civilisation. He is interested in things for longer and asks for stories, music and rhymes, and what does this mean?

As he develops a child learns much about life in his care of the garden, about language in his games, about human conduct from stories; but he does these things because he wants to do them, and because there is a play need behind it all, which for him is a life need; in order to build a straight wall he must classify his bricks, in order to be a real shopman he must know his weights, in order to be a good workman he must measure his paper; all the ideas gained from these things come to him *along with sense activity*; they are associated with the needs and interests of daily life; and because of this he puts into the activity all the effort of which he is capable, or as Dewey has expressed it, "the maximum of consciousness" into the experience which is his play. This is real sense training, differing in this respect from the training given by the Montessori material, which has no appeal to life interest, aims at exercising the senses separately, and discourages *play* with the apparatus. It is activity without a body, practice without an end, and nothing develops from it of a constructive or expressive nature.

In the nursery class therefore our curriculum is life, our apparatus all that a child's world includes, and our method the one of joyful investigation, by means of which ideas and skill are being acquired. The teacher is player in chief, ready to suggest, co-operate, supply information, lead or follow as circumstances demand: responsibility must still belong to the children, for while most of them know quite naturally how to play, there are many who will never get beyond a rather narrow limit, through lack of experience or of initiative.

It is quite safe to let experience take its chance through play, but there are certain things that must be dealt with quite definitely, when the teacher is not there as a playmate, but as something more in the capacity of a mother. It is impossible to train all the habits necessary at this time, through the spontaneous play, although incidentally many will be greatly helped and made significant by it. If the children come from poor homes where speech is imperfect, probably mere imitation of the teacher, which is the chief factor in ordinary language training, will be insufficient. It will be necessary to invent ways, chiefly games, by which the vocal organs may be used; this may be considered play, but it is more artificial and less spontaneous than the informal activity already described. It is well to be clear as to the kind of exercises best suited to make the vocal organs supple, and then to make these the basis of a game: for example, little children constantly imitate the cries of ordinary life; town children could dramatise a railway station where the sounds produced by engines and by porters give a valuable training; they could imitate street cries, the sound of the wind, of motor hooters, sirens, or of church bells. Country children could use the sounds of the farm-yard, the birds, or the wind. In the recognition of sound, which is as necessary as its production, such a guessing game could be taught as "I sent my son to be a grocer and the first thing he sold began with *s* and ended with *p*," using the *sounds*, not names of the letters. For the acquisition of a vocabulary, such a game as the Family Coach might be played and turned into many other vehicles or objects about which many stories could be told. All the time the game must be played with the same fidelity to the spirit of play as previously, but the introduction must be recognised as more artificial and forced, and this can be justified because so many children are not normal with regard to speech, and only where this is the

case should language training be forced upon them. Habits of courtesy, of behaviour at table, of position, of dressing and undressing, of washing hands and brushing teeth, and many others, must all be *taught*, but taught at the time when the need comes. Occasions will certainly occur during play, but the chances of repetition are not sufficient to count on.

Thus we summarise the chief business of the Nursery School teacher when we say that it is concerned chiefly with habits and play and right surroundings.

Play in the Transition Class is less informal. After the age of six certain ambitions grow and must be satisfied. The aspects of life are more separated, and concentration on individual ones is commoner; this means more separation into subjects, and thus a child is more willing to be organised, and to have his day to *some* extent arranged for him. While in the nursery class only what was absolutely necessary was fixed, in the Transition Class it is convenient to fix rather more, for the sake of establishing certain regular habits, and because it is necessary to give the freshest hours to the work that requires most concentration. We must remember, however, that it *is* a transition class, and not set up a completely fashioned time-table for the whole day. Reading and arithmetic must be acquired both as knowledge and skill, the mother tongue requires definite practice, there must be a time for physical activity, and living things must not be attended to spasmodically. Therefore it seems best that these things be taken in the morning hours, while the afternoon is still a time for free choice of activity.

The following is a plan for the Transition Class, showing the bridge between absolute freedom and a fully organised time-table—

[TABLE

	Morning.		Afternoon.	
Monday	Nature work.	Reading and Number.	Stories from Scripture or other literature, and stories of social life; music and singing; industrial activities, such as solving puzzles, playing games of skill, looking at pictures, arranging collections.	Organised games and handwork.
Tuesday	Care of the room.	Reading and Number.		Music and handwork.
Wednesday	Nature chart	Reading and Number.		Excursion or handwork.
Thursday	and General talk.	Reading and Number.		Dramatic representation including preparations.
Friday		Reading and Number.		Gardening or handwork.

Granting this arrangement we must be clear how play as a method can still hold.

It does not hold in the informal incidental sense of the Nursery School: there are periods in the Transition Class when the children know that they are working for a definite purpose which is not direct play—as in reading; and there are times when they are dissatisfied with their performances of skill and ask to be shown a better way, and voluntarily practise to secure the end, as in handwork, arithmetic and some kinds of physical games. The remainder is probably still pursued for its own sake. How then can this play spirit be maintained side by side with work?

First of all, the children should not be required to do anything without having behind it a purpose that appeals to them; it may not be the ultimate purpose of "their good," but a secondary reason may be given to which they will respond readily, generally the pretence reason. Arithmetic to the ordinary person is a thing of real life; we count chiefly in connection with money, with making things, with distributing things, or with arranging things, and we count carefully when we keep scores in games; in adult life we seldom or never count or perform arithmetical operations for sheer pleasure in the activity, but there are many children who do so in the same spirit as we play patience or chess. And all this is our basis. The

arithmetical activities in the Transition Class should therefore be based on such everyday experiences as have been mentioned, else there will be no associations made between the experiences of school and those of life outside. The two must merge. There is no such thing as arithmetic pure and simple for children unless they seek it; they must play at real life, and the real life that they are now capable of appreciating.

Skill in calculation, accuracy and quickness can be acquired by a kind of practice that children are quite ready for, if it comes when they realise the need; most children feel that their power to score for games is often too slow and inaccurate; as store clerks they are uncertain in their calculations; they will be willing to practise quick additions, subtractions, multiplications and divisions, in pure arithmetical form, if the pretence purpose is clearly in view, which to them is a real purpose; the same thing occurs in writing which should be considered a side issue of reading; meaningless words or sentences are written wearily and without pains, but to write the name of a picture you have painted, at the bottom of it, or to write something that Cinderella's Godmother said, or bit by bit to write a letter, will be having a purpose that gives life to an apparently meaningless act, and thoroughness to the effort.

In handwork, too, at this stage, practice takes an important place: a child is willing to hem, to try certain brush strokes, to cut evenly, and later on to use his cardboard knife to effect for the sake of a future result if he has already experimented freely. This is in full harmony with the spirit of play, when we think of the practised "strokes" and "throws" of the later games, but it is a more advanced quality of play, because there is the beginning of a purpose which is separated from immediate pleasure in the activity, there is the hint of an end in view though it is a child's end, and not the adult or economic one.

The training of the mother tongue can be made very effective by means of games: in the days when children's parties were simple, and family life was united, language games in the long dark evenings gave to many a grip of words and expressions. Children learnt to describe accurately, to be very fastidious in choice of words, to ask direct questions, to give verbal form to thought, all through the stress of such games—Man and his Shadow, Clumps, Subject and Object, Russian Scandal, the Minister's Cat, I see a Light, Charades, and acting of all kinds. No number of picture talks, oral compositions, or observations can compete in real value with these games, because behind them was a purpose or need for language that compelled the greatest efforts.

Physical development and its adjustment to mental control owes its greatest stimulus to games. When physical strength, speed, or nimble adjustability is the pivot upon which the game depends, special muscles are made subservient to will: behind the game there is the stimulus of strong emotion, and here is the greatest factor in establishing permanent associations between body and mind; psychologists see in many of these games of physical activity the evolution of the race: drill pure and simple has its place partly in the same sense as "practice" in number or handwork, and partly as a corrective to our fallacious system of education by listening, instead of by activity: and we cannot in a lifetime acquire the powers of the race except by concentrated practice. But no amount of drill can give the all-round experience necessary for physical readiness for an emergency, physical and mental power to endure, active co-operation, where self-control holds in check ambitious personal impulses: and no drill seems to give grace and beauty of motion that the natural activity of dancing can give. It is through the games that British children inherit, and by means of which they have unconsciously rehearsed

many of the situations of life, that they have been able to take their place readily in the life of the nation and even to help to save it. Again, as in other directions, children must be made to play the game in its thoroughness, for a well-played game gives the right balance to the activities: drill is more specialised, and has specialisation for its end: a game calls on the whole of an individual: he must be alert mentally and physically; and at the same time the sense of fairness cannot be too strongly insisted on; no game can be tolerated as part of education where there is looseness in this direction, from the skittles of the nursery class to the cricket and hockey of the seventh standard, and nothing will so entirely outrage the children's feelings as a teacher's careless arbitration. In physical games, too, the social side is strongly developed: leadership, self-effacement and co-operation are more valuable lessons of experience than fluent reading or neat writing or accurate additions: but they have not counted as such in our economic system of education; they have taken their chance: few inspectors ask to see whether children know how to "play the game," and yet they are so soon to play the independent game of life. But the individual output of reading and sums of a sneaking and cowardly, or assertive and selfish child, is as good probably as that of a child that has the makings of a hero in him. And then we wonder at the propensities of the "lower classes." It is because we have never made sure that they can play the game.

To summarise: play in the Nursery School stage is unorganised, informal, and pursued with no motive but pleasure in the activity itself; it is mainly individual. Play in the Transition Class is more definitely in the form of games, *i.e.* organised play, efforts of skill, mental or physical; it becomes social. Play in the Junior School is almost an occasional method, because the work motive is by this time getting stronger.

CHAPTER XIX

THE UNITY OF EXPERIENCE

"We find in the child's spontaneous choice the nature of the surroundings and of the activities he craves for; in other words, he makes his own curriculum, and selects his own subject matter."

THE next problem we have to solve is how to unify the bewildering variety of ideas and activities that a child seeks contact with during a day. We found that the curriculum of the Infant School of to-day presented a rather confusing variety of ideas, not necessarily arranged as the children would have chosen; they would certainly not have chosen to break off some intense interest, because an arbitrary time-table hurried them to something else, and they would have been right. If we asked the children their reasons for choosing, we would find no clue except that they chose what they wanted to, neither could they tell us why they spent so much more time over one thing than another. If a similar study were to be made of a child from a slum also free to arrange his day, we should find that while certain general features were the same others would be different: he would ask for different stories, probably play different games, or the same games in a different way, his back-yard would present different aspects, the things he made would be different.

It is evident that the old correlation method has little or nothing to do with the matter; a child may or may

not draw the rabbit he feeds, he certainly does not play a rabbit game because of the rabbit he has fed, nor does he build a rabbit-hutch with his bricks. He might try to make a real one if the rabbit really needed it, but that arises out of an obvious necessity. If he could put his unconscious promptings into words, he would say he did the things because he wanted to, because somebody else did them, or because of something he saw yesterday, and so on; but he would always refer back to *himself*. The central link in each case is in the child, with his special store of experiences derived from his own particular surroundings; he brings to new experiences his store of present experiences, his interests not always satisfied, his powers variously used, he interprets the new by these, and seeks for more in the line of the old. It is life he has experienced, and he seeks for more life.

How then can we secure for him that the new experiences presented to him in school will be in line with the old? We will take three typical cases of children to illustrate the real nature of this problem.

The first is the case of a child living in a very poor district of London or of any large town. The school is presumably situated in a narrow street running off the High Street of the district, the street where all the shopping is done; at the corner is a hide factory with an evil smell. Most of the dwelling-houses abut on the pavement, some with a very small yard behind, some without any. Several families live in one house, and often one room is all a family can afford; as that has to be paid for in advance the family address may change frequently. The father may be a dock labourer with uncertain pay, a coster, a rag and bone merchant, or he may follow some unskilled occupation of a similarly precarious nature; in consequence the mother has frequently to do daily work, the home is locked up till evening, and she often leaves before the children start for

morning school. It is a curious but very common fact that, free though these children are, they know only a very small radius around their own homes. They are accustomed to be sent shopping into High Street, where household stores are bought in pennyworths or twopennyworths, owing to uncertain finance and no storage accommodation. Generally there is one tap and one sink in the basement for the needs of all the families in the house. There is usually a park somewhere within reach, but it may be a mile away; in it would, at least, be trees, a pond, grass, flowers. But an excursion there, unless it is undertaken by the school, can only be hoped for on a fine Bank Holiday; there is neither time nor money to go on a Saturday, and Sunday cannot be said to begin till dinner-time, about 3 P.M., when the public-houses close, and the father comes home to dinner.

It is difficult to imagine the conversation of such a household; family life exists only on Sunday at dinner-time; the child's background of family life is a room which is at once a bedroom, living room and laundry. There is nearly always some part of a meal on the table, and some washing hanging up. Outside there are the dingy street, the crowded shops, the pavement to play on, and both outside and in, the bleaker and more sordid aspects of life, sometimes miserable, sometimes exciting. On Saturday night the lights are brilliant and life is at least intense. Bed is a very crowded affair, in which many half-undressed children sleep covered with the remainder of the day's wardrobe.

What store of experiences does a child from such a neighbourhood bring to school, to be assimilated with the new experiences provided there? What do such terms as home, dinner, bed, bath, birth, death, country, mean to him? They mean *something*.[1]

Not a mile away we may come to a very respectable suburb of the average type; and what is said of it may

[1] See *Child Life*, October 1916.

apply in some degree to a provincial or country town or, at least, the application can easily be made. The school probably stands at the top corner of a road of houses rented, at £25 to £35 per annum, with gardens in front and behind. The road generally runs into a main road with shops and traffic. Here and there in the residential road are little oases of shops, patronised by the neighbourhood, and some of the children may live over these. The home life is more ordinary and needs less descriptive detail, but there are some features that must be considered. The decencies, not to say refinements of eating, sleeping and washing are taken for granted: there is often a bath-room and always a kitchen. The father's occupation may be local, but a good many fathers will go to town; there is generally a family holiday to the sea, or less often to the country. In the house the degree of refinement varies; there are nearly always pictures of a sort, books of a sort, and the children are supplied with toys of a sort. They visit each other's houses, and the observances of social life are kept variously. Often the horizon is very narrow; the mother's interest is very local and timid; the father's business life may be absolutely apart from his home life and never mentioned there. The family conversation while quite amiable and agreeable may be round very few topics, and the vocabulary, while quite respectable, may be most limited. Children's questions may be put aside as either trivial or unsuitable. In one sense the slum child may be said to have a broader background, the realities of life are bare to him on their most sordid side, there is neither mystery nor beauty around life, or death, or the natural affections. The suburban child may on the contrary be balked and restricted so that unnecessary mystery gives an unwholesome interest to these things and conventionality a dishonest reserve.

A suburb of this type is described by Beresford in *Housemates*:—"In such districts (as Gospel Oak) I am

depressed by the flatness of an awful monotony. The slums vex me far less. There I find adventure and jest whatever the squalor; the marks of the primitive struggle through dirt and darkness towards release. Those horrible lines of moody, complacent streets represent not struggle, but the achievement of a worthless aspiration. The houses, with their deadly similarity, their smug, false exteriors, their conformity to an ideal which is typified by their poor imitative decoration, could only be inhabited by people who have no thought or desire for expression. . . . The dwellers in such districts are cramped into the vice of their environment. Their homes represent the dull concession to a state rule; and their lives take tone from the grey, smoke-grimed repetition of one endlessly repeated design. The same foolish ornamentation on every house reiterates the same suggestion. Their places of worship, the blank chapels and pseudo-Gothic churches rear themselves head and shoulders above the dull level, only to repeat the same threat of obedience to a gloomy law. . . . The thought of Gospel Oak and its like is the thought of imitation, of imitation falling back and becoming stereotyped, until the meaning of the thing so persistently copied has been lost and forgotten."

A third case is that of the country child, the child who attends the village school. Many villages lie several miles from a railway station, so that the younger children may not see a railway train more than once or twice a year. The fathers may be engaged in village trades, such as a shoemaker, carpenter, gardener, general shop merchant, farm labourer, or farmer. The village houses are often cramped and small, but there is wholesome space outside, and generally a good garden which supplies some of the family food; milk and eggs are easily obtainable, and conditions of living are seldom as crowded as in a town. The country children see more of life in complete miniature than the slum or the suburban child can do, for the whole life of

the village lies before him. The school is generally in the centre, with a good playground, and of late years a good school garden is frequent. The village church, generally old, is another centre of life, and there is at least the vicarage to give a type of life under different social conditions.

The home intellectual background may vary, but on the whole cannot be reckoned on very much; though in some ways it is more narrow than the suburban one, it is often less superficial. In a different way from the slum child, but none the less definitely, the country child comes face to face with the realities of life, in a more natural and desirable way than either of the others. It is difficult to estimate some of the effects of living in the midst of real nature on children; unconsciously, they acquire much deep knowledge impossible to learn through nature study, however good, a kind of knowledge that is part of their being; but how far it affects them emotionally or enters into their scheme of life, is hard to say. As they grow up much of it is merely economic acquirement: if they are to work on the land, or rear cattle, or drive a van through the country, it is all to the good; but one thing is noticeable, that they take very quickly to such allurements of town life as a cinema, or a picture paper or gramophone, and this points to unsatisfied cravings of some sort, not necessarily so unworthy or superficial as the means sought to satisfy them.

From these rather extreme cases we get near the solution of the problem; it is quite evident that each of these children brings to school very different contributions of experience on which to build, though their general needs and interests are similar. Therefore the curriculum of the school will depend on the general surroundings and circumstances of the children, and all programmes of work and many questions of organisation will be built on this. The model programme so dear to some teachers must be banished,

as a doctor would banish a general prescription; no honest teacher can allow this part of her work to be done for her by any one else.

Therefore the central point is the child's previous experience, and on this the experience provided by school, *i.e.* curriculum and subject matter, depends. One or two examples of the working out of this might make the application clearer. Probably the realities of life in relation to money differ greatly. The kind of problem presented to the poor town child will deal with shopping in pennyworths or ounces, with getting coals in pound bagfuls. Clothes are generally second-hand, and so ordinary standard prices are out of the question. Bread is bought stale and therefore cheaper, early in the morning. Preserved milk only is bought, and that in halfpenny quantities. Only problems based on these will be real to this child at first.

The suburban child's economic experience may be based on his pocket-money, money in the bank, and the normal shopping of ordinary life.

The country child is frequently very ignorant of money values; probably it will be necessary to take the country general shop as the basis. He could also begin to estimate the produce of the school garden.

The Nursery School Programme

It is quite obvious from the nature of play at this stage that a time-table is out of the question and in fact an outrage against nature. Only for social convenience and for the establishment of certain physical habits can there be fixed hours. There must be approximate limits as to the times of arrival and departure, but nothing of the nature of marking registers to record exact minutes. Little children sometimes sleep late, or, on the other hand, the

mothers may have to leave home very early; all this must be allowed for. There should be fixed times for meals and for sleep, and these should be rigidly observed, and there should be regular times for the children to go to the lavatories; all these establish regularity and self-control, as well as improving general health. But anything in the nature of story periods, games periods, handwork periods, only impedes the variously developing children in their hunger for experiences.

Their curriculum is life as the teacher has spread it out before them; there are no subjects at this stage; the various aspects ought to be of the nature of a glorious feast to these young children. Traherne says in the seventeenth century:—

"Will you see the infancy of this sublime and celestial greatness? Those pure and virgin apprehensions I had in my infancy, and that divine light wherewith I was born, are the best unto this day wherein I can see the Universe. . . . Verily they form the greatest gift His wisdom can bestow, for without them all other gifts had been dead and vain. They are unattainable by books and therefore will I teach them by experience. . . . Certainly Adam in Paradise had not more sweet and curious apprehensions of the world than I when I was a child.

"All appeared new and strange at first, inexpressibly rare and delightful and beautiful. I was a little stranger which at my entrance into the world was saluted and surrounded with innumerable joys. . . . I knew by intuition those things which since my apostasy I collected again by the highest reason. . . . All things were spotless and pure and glorious; yea, and infinitely mine, and joyful and precious. . . . I saw in all the peace of Eden. . . . Is it not that an infant should be heir of the whole world, and see those mysteries which the books of the learned never unfold?

"The corn was orient and immortal wheat which never

should be reaped, nor was ever sown. I thought it stood from everlasting to everlasting. The dust and stones of the street were as precious as gold: the gates were at first the end of the world. The green trees when I saw them first through one of the gates transported and ravished me: . . . the skies were mine, and so were the sun and moon and stars, and all the world was mine: and I the only spectator and enjoyer of it. . . . So that with much ado I was corrupted and made to learn the dirty devices of this world, which I now unlearn, and become, as it were, a little child again that I may enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

If this is what life means to the young child, and Traherne only records what many of us have forgotten there is little need for interference: we can only spread, the feast and stand aside to watch for opportunities.

The following extract is given from a teacher's note-book: it shows how many possibilities open out to a teacher, and how impossible it is to keep to a time-table, or even to try to name the activities. The children concerned were about five years old, newly admitted to a poor school in S.E. London. The records are selected from a continuous period, and do not apply to one day:—

Plans for the Day	What actually happened
Number Occupations.—This will be entirely free and the children will choose their own toys and put them away.	The children played, freely chalking most of the time; those threading beads were most interested. Again I noticed the lack of idea of colour; I found one new boy placing his sticks according to colour, without knowing the names of the colours. The boys thought the soldiers belonged to them, and laughed at a little girl for choosing them.

Plans for the Day	What actually happened
Language Training.—I have discovered that they love to imitate sounds, so we will play at this. They could draw a cat and say "miauw," and a duck and say "quack." They could also imitate the wind.	I realised this was a failure, for I asked the children to use their boards and chalks for a definite drawing, and they should have had the time to use them freely and discover their use. I got very little information about their vocabulary.
Language Training (another day).—I shall try to induce the children to speak to me about their homes, in order to discover any difficulties of pronunciation and to make them more fluent.	I found that many children pronounced words so strangely that I could only with difficulty recognise them. One said she had a "bresser" with "clates" on it and "knies." Others spoke of "manckle," "firebrace," "forts." One child speaking of curly hair called it "killeyer." We had no time for the story.
Playing with Toys.—The children will choose their own toys, and as far as possible I will put a child who knows how to use them next to one who desires to sit still.	Noah's arks, dolls, and bricks were used, and I found that the girls who had no dolls at home were delighted to be able to dress and undress them and put them to bed. One little girl walked backwards and forwards before the class getting her doll to sleep; the boys were making a noise with their arks and she remarked on this, so we induced them to be silent while the dolls were put to sleep. The boys arranged their animals in long lines. The bricks were much more carefully put away to-day.

The Transition and the Junior School Programme

Even after the Nursery School period much of the curriculum and subject matter is in the hands of the children themselves, though the relative proportions will vary accord-

ing to the children's experiences. It is pretty evident to the honest-minded teacher that the subjects are, in school terms, nature work and elementary science, mathematics, constructive and expressive work, literature, music, language, physical exercise and religion. The business of the younger child is with real things and activity, not with symbols and passivity, therefore he is not really in need of reading, writing, or arithmetic. We hear arguments from ambitious teachers that children are fond of reading lessons because they enjoy the fantasies in which these lessons are wrapped, or the efforts made by the teacher to create interest; we hear that children ask to be taught to read; they also ask to be taught to drive a tram or to cook a dinner; but it is all part of the pretence game of playing at being grown up. They do not need to read while stories and poetry can be told or read to them; they are not ready to make the effort of working for a remote economic end, where there is no real pleasure in the activity, and no opportunity of putting their powers to use. No child under six wants to sit down and read, and it would be very harmful if he did; his business is with real things and with his vocabulary, which is not nearly ready to put into symbols yet. If reading is delayed, hours of weary drudgery will be saved and energy stored for more precious attainments.

Therefore in the transition class (*i.e.* children over six at lowest) the only addition to the curriculum already set out for the nursery class, would be arithmetic and reading, including writing. The other differences would be in degree only. In the junior class (with children over seven at lowest) a desire to know something of the doings of people in other countries, to hear about other parts of our own land, will lead to the beginnings of geography; while with this less imaginative and more literal period comes the request for stories that are more verbally true. and questions about origins, leading to the beginnings of history.

It is very much easier to give the general curriculum than to deal with the choice of actual material, because that is involved largely with the principle of the unity of experience, and, as we know, experiences vary. The normal town and country child, and the abnormal child of poverty have all certain human cravings in common, and these are provided for in the aspects of life or subjects that have been named—but this is far too general an application to be the end of the matter; each subject has many sides to offer. There may be for example the pottery town, the weaving town, the country town, the fishing town, the colliery town: in the country there is the district of the dairy farmer, of the sheep farmer, of the grain grower and miller, of the fruit farmer, of the hop grower, and many districts may partake of more than one characteristic. Perhaps the most curious anomaly of experience is that of the child of the London slums who goes "hopping" into some of the loveliest parts of Kent, in early autumn. And so in a general way at least the concentrated experience of school must fill gaps and supply experiences that life has not provided for.

One of the pottery towns in Staffordshire is built on very unfertile clay; there are several potteries in the town belching out smoke, and, in addition, rows of monotonous smoke-blackened houses; almost always a yellow pall of smoke hangs over the whole district, and even where the edge of the country might begin, the grass and trees are poor and blackened, and distant views are seen through a haze. There are almost no gardens in the town, and very little attempt has been made to beautify it, because the results are so disappointing. Beauty, therefore, in various forms must be a large part of the curriculum: already design is a common interest in the pottery museums of the district, and this could be made a motive for the older children; but in the Junior and Nursery School pictures of natural beauty, wild flowers if it is possible to get them, music, painting

and drawing, and literature should bulk largely enough to make a permanent impression on the children. In a very remote country village where life seems to go slowly, and days are long, children should be encouraged, by means of the school influence, to make things that absorb thought and interest, to tell and hear stories. Storytelling in the evening round the fire is a habit of the past, and might well supply some of the cravings that have to be satisfied by the " pictures." Most of us have to keep ourselves well in hand when we listen to a recitation in much the same way as when a slate pencil used to creak; it would be very much better if the art of storytelling were cultivated at school, encouraged at home, and applied to entertainments. Indeed the entertainments of a village school, instead of being the unnatural and feverish production of hours of overtime, might well be the ordinary outcome of work both at school and at home—and thus a motive for leisure is naturally supplied and probably a hobby initiated.

It is profitable sometimes to group the subjects of experience in order to preserve balance. All getting of experience is active, but some kinds more obviously than others. Undoubtedly in hearing stories and poetry, in watching a snail or a bee, in listening to music, the activity is mental rather than physical and assimilation of ideas is more direct; in discovering experiences by means of construction, expression, experiment or imitation, assimilation is less direct but often more permanent and secure. Froebel discriminates between impression and expression, or taking in and giving out, and although he constantly emphasised that the child takes in by giving, it is convenient to recognise this distinction. Another helpful grouping is the more objective one. Some subjects refer more particularly to human conduct, the enlargement of experiences of human beings, and the building up of the ideal: these are literature, music, history and geography; others refer to life other than

that of human beings, commonly known as nature study and science; others to the properties of inanimate things, and to questions throughout all life of measurement, size and force —this is known as mathematics; others of the life behind the material and the spiritual world—this is known as religion.

CHAPTER XX

GAINING EXPERIENCE THROUGH FREEDOM

"The atmosphere of freedom is the only atmosphere in which a child can gain experiences that will help to develop character."

THE principle of Freedom underlies all the activities of the school and does not refer to conduct simply; intellectual and emotional aspects of discipline are too often ignored and we have as a product the commonplace, narrow, imitative person, too timid or too indolent to think a new thought, or to feel strongly enough to stand for a cause. Self-control is the goal of discipline, but independent thinking, enthusiasm and initiative are all included in the term.

It will be well to discriminate between the occasions, both in the Nursery School and in the transition and junior classes, when a child should be free to learn by experience and when he should be controlled from without. We shall probably find occasions which partake of the nature of each.

The Nursery School is a collection of individuals presumably from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to $5\frac{1}{2}$ years of age. They know no social life beyond the family life, and family experience is relative to the size of the family. In any case they have not yet measured themselves against their peers, with the exception of the occasional twin. A few months ago about twenty children of this description formed the nucleus of a new Nursery School where, as far as possible, the world in miniature was spread out before them, and they were

guided in their entrance to it by an experienced teacher and a young helper. For the first few weeks the chief characteristic was noise; the children rushed up and down the large room, shouting, and pushing any portable toys they could find. One little boy of $2\frac{1}{2}$ employed himself in what can only be called "punching" the other children, snatching their possessions away from them and responding to the teacher by the law of contra-suggestion. He was the most intelligent child in the school. He generally left a line of weeping children behind him, and several began to imitate him. The pugnacious instinct requires little encouragement. Lunch was a period of snatching, spilling, and making plans to get the best. Many of the toys provided were carelessly trampled upon and broken: requests to put away things at the end of the day were almost unavailing.

When the time for sleeping came in the afternoon many of the children refused to lie down: some consented but only to sing and talk as they lay. Only one, a child of $2\frac{1}{2}$, slept, because he cried himself to sleep from sheer strangeness. This apparently unbeautiful picture is only the first battle of the individual on his entrance to the life of the community.

On the other hand, there were intervals of keen joy: water, sand and clay chiefly absorbed the younger children; the older ones wanted to wash up and scrub, and many spent a good deal of time looking at picture-books. This was the raw material for the teacher to begin with: the children came from comfortable suburban homes: none were really poor, and many had known no privation. They were keen for experiences and disposed to be very friendly to her.

After five months there is a marked difference in spirit. The noise is modified because the children found other absorbing interests, though at times nature still demands

voice production. During lunch time and sleeping time there is quiet, but the teacher has never *asked* for silence unless there was some such evident reason. There is no silence game. The difference has come from within the children. All now lie down in the afternoon quietly, and the greater number sleep; but there has been no command or any kind of general plan; again the desire has gradually come to individuals from suggestion and imitation. Lunch is quite orderly, but not yet without an occasional accident or struggle. There is much less fighting, but primitive man is still there. The most marked development is in the growth of the idea of "taking turns"; the children have begun to master this all-important lesson of life. The strong pugnacious habit in the little punching boy reached a point that showed he was unable to conquer it from within: about two months after his arrival the teacher consulted his mother, who confirmed all that the teacher had experienced: her prescription was smacking. After a good deal of thought and many ineffectual talks and experiments with the boy, the teacher came to the conclusion that the mother was right: she took him to the cloakroom after the next outbreak and smacked his hands: he was surprised and a little hurt, but very soon forgot and continued his practices: on the next occasion the teacher repeated the punishment and it was never again necessary. For a few days he was at a loss for an occupation because punching had become a confirmed habit, but soon other interests appealed to him: he has never changed in his trust in his teacher of whom he is noticeably very fond, and he has now realised that he must control a bad habit. This example has been given at length to illustrate the relation of government to freedom.

If these children had been in the ordinary Baby Room, subject to a time-table, to constant plans by the teacher for their activities, few or none of these occasions would have

occurred: the incipient so-called naughtiness would have been displayed only outside, in the playground or at home: there would have been little chance of chaos, of fighting, of punching, of trying to get the best thing and foremost place, there would have been little opportunity for choice and less real absorption, because of the time-table. The children would have been happy enough, but they would not have been trained to live as individuals. Outward docility is a fatal trait and very common in young children; probably it is a form of self-preservation. But the real child only lies in wait to make opportunities out of school. The school is therefore not preparing him for life.

Freedom in the transition and the junior school must be differently applied: individual life begins to merge into community life, and the children begin to learn that things right for individuals may be wrong for the community. But the problem of freedom is not as easy as the problem of authority: standards must be greatly altered and outward docility no longer mistaken for training in self-control. Individual training cannot suddenly become class discipline, neither can children be switched from the Nursery School to a full-blown class system.

The idea of class teaching must be postponed, for out of it come most of the difficulties of discipline, and it is not the natural arrangement at this transitional period. A teacher is imposing on a number of very different individuals a system that says their difficulties are alike, that they must all work at one rate and in one way: and so we have the weary "reading round" class, when the slow ones struggle and the quick ones find other and unlawful occupation: we have the number lessons broken by the teacher's breathless attempts to see that all the class follows: we have the handwork that imposes an average standard of work that fits nobody exactly. Intellectual freedom can only

come by individual or group work, while class teaching is only for such occasions as a literature or a singing lesson, or the presentation of an occasional new idea in number. Individual and group work need much organisation, but while classes consist of over forty children there is no other way to permit intellectual and moral freedom. Of course the furniture of the room will greatly help to make this more possible, and it is hoped that an enlightened authority will not continue to supply heavy iron-framed desks for the junior school, those described as "desks for listening."

The prevailing atmosphere should be a busy noise and not silence—it should be the noise of children working, oftener than of the teacher teaching, *i.e.* teaching the whole class. The teacher should be more frequently among the children than at her desk, and the children's voices should be heard more often than hers.

Such children will inevitably become intellectually independent and morally self-controlled. Most of the order should be taken in hand by children in office, and they should be distinguished by a badge: most questions of punishment should be referred to them. This means a constant appeal to the law that is behind both teacher and children and which they learn to reach apart from the teacher's control.

"Where 'thou shalt' of the law becomes 'I will' of the doer, then we are free."

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE ASPECTS OF EXPERIENCE

The aim of the following chapters is to show how principles may be applied to what are usually known as subjects of the curriculum, and what place these subjects take in the acquisition of experience. An exhaustive or detailed treatment of method is not intended, but merely the establishment of a point of view and method of application.

CHAPTER XXI

EXPERIENCES OF HUMAN CONDUCT

It is always difficult to see the beginnings of things: we know that stories form the raw material of morality, it is not easy to trace morality in *Little Black Sambo*, *The Three Bears*, *Alice in Wonderland*, or *The Sleeping Beauty*, but nevertheless morality is there if we recognise morality in everyday things. It is not too much to say that everybody should have an ideal, even a burglar: his ideal is to be a good and thorough burglar, and probably if he is a burglar of the finer sort, it is to play fair to the whole gang. It is better to be a burglar with an ideal than a blameless person with very little soul or personality, who just slides through life accepting things: it is better to have a coster's ideal of a holiday than to be too indifferent or stupid to care or to know what you want.

Now ideals are supposed to be the essence of morality and morality comes to us through experience, and only

experience tests its truth. The story with a moral is generally neither literature nor morality, except such unique examples as *The Pilgrim's Progress* or *Everyman*. The kind of experience with which morality is concerned is experience of human life in various circumstances, and the way people behave under those circumstances. The beginning of such experience is our own behaviour and the behaviour of other people we know, but this is too limited an experience to produce a satisfactory ideal; so we crave for something wider. It is curious how strong is the craving for this kind of experience in all normal children, in whom one would suppose sense experiences and especially muscular experiences to be enough. The need to know about people other than ourselves, and yet not too unlike, in circumstances other than our own, and yet not too strange, seems to be a necessary part of our education, and we interpret it in the light of our own personal conduct. Out of this, as well as out of our direct experience, we build our ideal. When one realises how an ideal may colour the whole outlook of a person, one begins to realise what literature means to a child. The early ideal is crude; it may be Jack the Giant-Killer, or an engine-driver, Cinderella, or the step-cleaner; this may grow into Hiawatha or Robinson Crusoe, for boys, and a fairy tale Princess or one of the "Little Women" for girls. In every hero a child half-unconsciously sees himself, and the ideal stimulates all that hidden life which is probably the most important part of his growth. As indirect experiences grow, or in other words as he hears or reads more stories, his ideal widens, and his knowledge of the problems of life is enlarged. This is the raw material of morality, for out of his answers to these problems he builds up standards of conduct and of judgement. He projects himself into his own ideal, and he projects himself into the experiences of other people: he lives in both: this is imagination of the

highest kind, it is often called sympathy, but the term is too limited, it is rather imaginative understanding.

There is another side of life grasped by means of this new world of experience, and that is the spiritual side that lies between conduct and ideals; children have always accepted the supernatural quite readily and it is not to be wondered at, for all the world is new and therefore supernatural to them. Magic is done daily in children's eyes, and there is no line between what is understandable and what is not, until adults try to interpret it for them.

They are curious about birth and death and all origins: thunder is terrifying, the sea is enthralling, the wind is mysterious, the sky is immense, and all suggest a power beyond: in this the children are reproducing the race experience as expressed in myths, when power was embodied in a god or goddess. Therefore the fairy world or the giant world, or the wood full of dwarfs and witches' houses, is as real to them, and as acceptable, as any part of life. It is their recognition of a world of spirits which later on mingles itself with the spiritual life of religion. That life is behind all matter, is the main truth they hold, and while it is difficult here to disentangle morality from religion, it is supremely evident that a very great and significant side of a child's education is before us.

It is by means of the divine gift of imagination, probably the most spiritual of a child's gifts, that he can lay hold of all that the world of literature has to offer him. Because of imagination he is independent of poverty, monotony, and the indifference of other people; he has a world of his own in which nothing is impossible. Edwin Pugh says of a child of the slums who was passionately fond of reading cheap literature:—"It was by means of this penny passport to Heaven that she escaped from the Hell of her surroundings. It was in the maudlin fancies of some poor besotted literary hack maybe, that she found surcease from

the pains of weariness, the carks and cares of her miserable estate."

A teacher realising this, should feel an almost unspeakable sense of responsibility in having to select and present matter: but the problem should be solved on the one hand by her own high standard of story material, and on the other by her knowledge of the child's needs. According to his experiences of life the interpretation of the story will differ: for example, it was found that the children of a low slum neighbourhood translated *Jack the Giant-killer* into terms of a street fight: to children living by a river or the sea, the *Water-Babies* would mean very much, while *Jan of the Windmill* would be more familiar ground for country children. Fairy stories of the best kind have a universal appeal.

In choosing a story a teacher should be aware of the imperishable part of it, the truth around which it grew; sometimes the truth may seem a very commonplace one, sometimes a curious one. For example, very young children generally prefer stories of home life because round the family their experience gathers: the subject seems homely, but it is really one of the fundamental things of life and the teacher should realise this in such a way that the telling or reading of the story makes the kernel its central point. To some children the ideal home life comes only through literature: daily experiences rather contradict it. Humour is an important factor in morality; unless a person is capable of seeing the humour of a situation he is likely to be wanting in a sense of balance; the humour of a situation is often caused by the wrong proportion or wrong balance of things: for example the humour of *The Mad Tea-Party* lies, partly at least, in the absurd gravity with which the animals regarded the whole situation, the extreme literal-mindedness of Alice, and the exaggerated imitation of human beings: a really moral person must have balance as

well as sympathy, else he sees things out of proportion. These examples make evident that we are not to seek for anything very patently high-flown in the stories for children; it is life in all its phases that gives the material, but it must be true life: not false or sentimental or trivial life: this will rule out the "pretty" stories for children written by trivial people in teachers' papers, or the pseudo-nature story, or the artificial myth of the "How did" type, or the would-be childish story where the language is rather that of the grown-up imitating children than that of real children. Of late years, with the discovery of children, children's literature has grown, and there is a good deal to choose from past and present writers.

There is no recognised or stereotyped method of telling a story to children: it is something much deeper than merely an acquired art, it is the teacher giving something of her personality to the children, something that is most precious. One of the finest of our English Kindergarten teachers once said, "I feel almost as if I ought to prepare my soul before telling a story to young children," and this is the sense in which the story should be chosen and told. There are, of course, certain external qualifications which must be so fully acquired as to be used unconsciously, such as a good vocabulary, power over one's voice, a recognition of certain literary phases in a story, such as the working up to the dramatic crisis, the working down to the end so that it shall not fall flat, and the dramatic touches that give life; these are certainly most necessary, and should be studied and cultivated; but a teacher should not be hampered in her telling by being too conscious of them. Rather she should feel such respect and even reverence for this side of a child's education that the framework and setting can only be of the best, always remembering at the same time what is framework and setting, and what is essence.

Much that has been said about the method and aim of stories might apply to those taken from the Bible, but they

need certain additional considerations. Here religion and morality come very closely together: the recognition of a definite personality behind all circumstances of life, to whom our conduct matters, gives a soul to morality. The Old Testament is a record of the growth of a nation more fully conscious of God than is the record of any other nation, and because of this children can understand God in human life when they read such stories as the childhood of Moses and of Samuel. Children resemble the young Jewish nation in this respect: they accept the direct intervention of God in the life of every day. Their primitive sense of justice, which is an eye for an eye, will make them welcome joyfully the plagues of Egypt and the crossing of the Red Sea. It would be premature to force on them the more mature idea of mercy, which would probably lead to confusion of judgement: they must be clear about the balance of things before they readjust it for themselves.

Much of the material in the Old Testament is hardly suitable for very young children, but the most should be made of what there is: the lives of Eastern people are interesting to children and help to make the phraseology of the Psalms and even of the narratives clear to them. Wonder stories such as the Creation, the Flood, the Burning Bush, Elijah's experiences, appeal to them on another side, the side that is eager to wonder: the accounts of the childhood of Ishmael, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, David and Samuel, and the little Syrian maid, come very close to them. Such stories should be given to young children so that they form part of the enchanted memory of childhood—which is permanent.

With the New Testament the problem is more difficult: one hesitates to bring the life of Christ before children until they are ready to understand, even in some degree, its significance; the subject is apt to be dealt with either too familiarly, and made too commonplace and everyday a

matter, or as something so far removed from human affairs as to be mysterious and remote to a child. To mix Old and New Testament indiscriminately, as, for example, by taking them on alternate days, is unforgivable, and no teacher who has studied the Bible seriously could do so, if she cared about the religious training of her children, and understood the Bible.

If the children can realise something of the sense in which Christ helped human beings, then some of the incidents in His life might be given, such as His birth, His work of healing, feeding and helping the poor, and some of His stories, such as the lost sheep, the lost son, the sower, the good Samaritan. It is difficult to speak strongly enough of the mistreatment of Scripture, under the name of religion: it has been spoilt more than any other subject in the curriculum, chiefly by being taken too often and too slightly, by teachers who may be in themselves deeply religious, but who have not applied intelligence to this matter. The religious life of a young child is very direct: there is only a little in the religious experiences of the Jews that can help him, and much that can puzzle and hinder him; their interpretation of God as revengeful, cruel and one-sided in His dealings with their enemies must greatly puzzle him, when he hears on the other hand that God is the Father of all the nations on the earth. What is suitable should be taken and taken well, but there is no virtue in the Bible misunderstood.

Poetry is a form of literature which appeals to children *if they are not made to learn it by rote.* Unconsciously they learn it very quickly and easily, if they understand in a general way the meaning, and if they like the sound of the words. Rhythm is an early inheritance and can be encouraged by poetry, music and movement. The sound of words appeals strongly to young children, and rhyming is almost a game. The kind of poetry preferred varies a good deal

but on the whole narrative or nonsense verses seem most popular; few children are ready for sentiment or reflection even about themselves, and this is why some of Stevenson's most charming poems about children are not appreciated by them as much as by grown-up people. And for the same reason only a few nature poems are really liked.

Without doubt, the only aim in giving poetry to children is to help them to appreciate it, and the only method to secure this is to read it to them appreciatively and often.

Besides such anthologies as *The Golden Staircase*, E. V. Lucas's *Book of Verses for Children*, and others, we must go to the Bible for poems like the Song of Miriam, or of Deborah, and the Psalms; to Shakespeare for such songs as "Where the Bee Sucks," "I know a Bank," "Ye Spotted Snakes," either with or without music; to Longfellow's *Hiawatha* for descriptive pieces, and to Scott and Tennyson for ballads and songs, and to many other simple classic sources outside the ordinary collections.

In both prose and poetry, probably the ultimate aim is appreciation of beauty in human conduct. Clutton Brock says, "The value of art is the value of the aesthetic activity of the spirit, and we must all value that before we can value works of art rightly: and ultimately we must value this glory of the universe, to which we give the name of beauty when we apprehend it." Again he says, "Parents, nurses and teachers ought to be aware that the child when he forgets himself in the beauty of the world is passing through a sacred experience which will enrich and glorify the whole of his life."

If all this is what literature means in a child's experiences of life, then it must be given a worthy place in the time-table and curriculum and in the serious preparation by the teacher for her work.

CHAPTER XXII

EXPERIENCES OF THE NATURAL WORLD

THE first experiences the child gains from the world of nature are those of beauty, of sound, colour and smell. Flowers at first are just lovely and sweet-smelling; the keen senses of a child are more deeply satisfied with colour and scent than we have any idea of, unless some faint memory of what it meant remains with us. But he begins to grasp real scientific truth from his experiences with the elements which have for him such a mysterious attraction; by the very contact with water something in the child responds to its stimulus. Mud and sand have their charms, quite intangible, but universal, from prince to coster; a bonfire is something that arouses a kind of primeval joy. Again, race experience reproducing itself may account for all this, and it must be satisfied. The demand for contact with the rest of nature is a strong and fierce part of human nature, and it means the growth of something in life that we cannot do without. We induce children to come into our schools when this hunger is at its fiercest, and very often we do nothing to satisfy it, but set them in rooms to look at things inanimate when their very being is crying out for life. "I want something and I don't know what to want" is the expression of a state very frequent in children, and not infrequent in grown-up people, because they have been balked of something.

How, then, can we provide for their experience of this side of life? We have tried to do so in the past by object and nature lessons, but we must admit that they are not the means by which young children seek to know life, or by which they appreciate its beauty. We have been trying to kill too many birds with one stone in our economic way; "to train the powers of observation," "to teach a child to express himself," "to help a child to gain useful knowledge about living things," have been the most usual aims. And the method has been that of minute examination of a specimen from the plant or animal world, utterly detached from its surroundings, considered by the docile child in parts, such as leaves, stem, roots, petals, and uses; or head, wings, legs, tail, and habits. The innocent listener might frequently think with reason that a number lesson rather than a nature lesson was being given. The day of the object lesson is past, and to young children the nature lesson must become nature work.

It is in the term "nature lesson" that the root of the mischief lies: nature is not a lesson to the young child, it is an interest from which he seeks to gain more pleasure, by means of his own activity: plants encourage him to garden, animals stir his desire to watch, feed and protect; water, earth and fire arouse his craving to investigate and experiment: there is no motive for passive study at this juncture, and without a motive or purpose all study leads to nothing. Adults compare, and count the various parts of a living thing for purposes of classification connected with the subdivisions of life which we call botany and zoology; but such things are far removed from the young child's world—only gradually does it begin to dawn on him that there are interesting likenesses, and that in this world, as in his own, there are relationships; when he realises this, the time for a nature lesson has come. But much direct experience must come first.

In setting out the furnishing of the school the need for this activity is implied. No school worthy of the name can do without a garden, any more than it can do without reading books, or blackboards, indeed the former need is greater: if it is possible, and possibilities gradually merge into acceptances, a pond should be in the middle of the garden, and trees should also be considered as part of the whole. It is not difficult for the ordinary person to make a pond, or even to begin a garden.

In a school situated in S.E. London in the midst of rows of monotonous little houses, and close to a busy railway junction, a miracle was performed: the playground was not very large, and of the usual uncompromising concrete. The children, most of whose fathers worked on the railway, lived in the surrounding streets, and most of them had a back-yard of sorts; they had little or no idea of a garden. One of the teachers had, however, a vision which became a reality. She asked her children to help to make a garden, and for weeks every child brought from his back-yard his little paper bag of soil which was deposited over some clinkers that were spread out in a narrow border against the outside wall; in a few months there was a border of two yards in which flowers were planted: the caretaker, inspired by the sight, did his share of fixing a wooden strip as a kind of supporting border to the whole: in two years the garden had spread all round the outside wall of the playground, and belonged to several classes.

An even greater miracle was performed in a dock-side school, where to most of the children a back-yard was a luxury beyond all possibility. The school playground was very small, and evening classes made a school garden quite impossible. But the head mistress was one who saw life full of possibilities, and so she saw a garden even in the sordidness. Round the parish church was a graveyard long disused, and near one of the gates a small piece of ground

that had never been used for any graveyard purpose: it was near enough to the school to be possible, and in a short time the miracle happened—the entrance to the graveyard became a children's flowering garden.

Inside the school where plants and flowers in pots are numerous, a part of the morning should be spent in the care of these: few people know how to arrange flowers, and fewer how to feed and wash them; if there are an aquarium or chrysalis boxes, they have to be attended to: all this should be a regular duty with a strong sense of responsibility attached to it; it is curious how many people are content to live in an atmosphere of decaying matter.

If the children enjoy so intensely the colour of the leaves and flowers they will be glad to have the opportunity of painting them; this is as much a part of nature work as any other, and it should be used as such, because it emphasises so strongly the side of appreciation of beauty, a side very often neglected. It is here that the individual paint box is so important. If children are to have any sense of colour they must learn to match very truthfully; there is a great difference between the blue of the forget-me-not and of the bluebell, but only by experiment can children discover that the difference lies in the amount of red in the latter. By means of discoveries of this kind they will see new colours in life around them, and a new depth of meaning will come to their everyday observations. This is true observation, not the "look and say" of the oral lesson, which has no purpose in it, and leads to no natural activity, or to appreciation.

It is difficult to satisfy the interest in animals. In connection with the Nursery School the most suitable have been mentioned. The transition and junior school children may see others when they go for excursions. At this stage, too, children have a great desire to learn about wild animals, and the need often arises out of their literature: the camel

that brought Rebecca to Isaac, the wolf that adopted Mowgli, the reindeer that carried Kay and Gerda, the fox that tried to eat the seven little kids, Androcles' lion, and Black Sambo's tiger, might form an interesting series, helped by pictures of the creature *in its own home.* It is difficult to say whether this may be termed literature, geography, or nature study. The difficulty serves to show the unity of life at this period. Books such as Seton Thompson's, Long's, and Kearton's, and many others, supply living experiences of animal life impossible to get from less direct sources.

As children get older, and have the power to look back, they will feel the necessity of keeping records; and thus the Nature Calendar, forerunner of geography, will be adopted naturally.

Another important feature in nature experiences is the excursion. Froebel says: "Not only children and boys, but indeed many adults, fare with nature and her character as ordinary men fare with the air. They live in it and yet scarcely know it as something distinct . . . therefore these children and boys who spend all their time in the fields and forests see and feel nothing of the beauties of nature and their influence on the human heart. They are like people who have grown up in a very beautiful country and who have no idea of its beauty and its spirit . . . therefore it is so important that boys and adults should go into the fields and forests, together striving to receive into their hearts and minds the life and spirit of nature." It is evident from this that excursions are as necessary in the country as in the town, where instead of the "fields and forests" perhaps only a park is possible, but there is no virtue in an excursion taken without preparation. The teacher must first of all visit the place and see what it is likely to give the children. She must tell them something of it, give them some aim in going there, such as collecting

leaves or fruits, or recording different shapes of bare trees, or collecting things that grow in the grass. These are examples of what a town park might yield. Within one group of children there might be many with different aims. During the days following the excursion time should be spent in using these experiences, either by means of painting and modelling, or making classified collections of things found, or compiling records, oral or written. Otherwise the excursion degenerates into a school treat without its natural enjoyment.

With regard to the inevitable gaps in the children's minds in connection with the world of living things, such pictures as the following should be in every town school: a pine wood, a rabbit warren, a natural pond, a ditch and hedge, a hayfield in June, a wild daffodil patch, a sheet of bluebells, a cornfield at different stages, an orchard in spring and in autumn, and many others. These must be constantly used when they are needed, and not misused in the artificial method known as "picture talks."

There is another side to nature work. Froebel says: "The things of nature form a more beautiful ladder between heaven and earth than that seen by Jacob; not a one-sided ladder leading in one direction, but an all-sided one leading in all directions. Not in dreams is it seen; it is permanent, it surrounds us on all sides."

Froebel believed that contact with nature helps a child's realisation of God, and any one who believes in early religious experience must agree; a child's early questions and difficulties, as well as his early awe and fear show it—he is probably nearer to God in his nature work than in many of the *daily* Scripture lessons. All his education should be permeated by spiritual feeling, but there are some aspects in which the realisation is clearer, and possibly his contact with nature stands out as the highest in this respect. There is no conscious method or art in bringing

this about; the teacher must feel it and be convinced of it.

Thus we come to the conclusion that the Nursery School nature work can be safely left to look after itself, provided the surroundings are satisfying and the children are free.

In the transition and the junior school there should be no nature lessons of the object lesson type, but plenty of nature work, leading to talks, handwork, and poetry. The aim is not economic or informational at this stage, but the development of pure appreciation and interest. There can hardly be a regular place on the time-table for such irregular work, comprising excursions, gardening, handwork, and literature at least, and depending on the weather and the seasons. There should always be a regular morning time for attending to plants and animals and for the Nature Calendar, but no "living" teacher will be a slave to mere time-table thraldom.

CHAPTER XXIII

EXPERIENCES OF MATHEMATICAL TRUTHS

By means of toys, handwork and games, as well as various private individual experiments, a child touches on most sides of mathematics in the nursery class. In experimenting with bricks he must of necessity have considered relative size, balance and adjustment, form and symmetry; in fitting them back into their boxes some of the most difficult problems of cubic content; in weighing out "pretence" sugar and butter by means of sand and clay new problems are there for consideration; in making a paper-house questions of measurement evolve. This is all in the incidental play of the Nursery School, and yet we might say that a child thus occupied is learning mathematics more than anything else. Here, if he remained till six, he did a certain amount of necessary counting, and he may have acquired skill in recognising groups, he may have unconsciously and incidentally performed achievements in the four rules, but never, of course, in any shortened or technical form. Probably he knows some figures. It is best to give these to a child when he asks for or needs them, as in the case of records of games. On the other hand he may be content with strokes. Various mathematical relationships are made clear in his games or trials of strength, such as distance in relation to time or strength, weight in relation to power and to balance, length and breadth in relation to materials, value of material in relation to money or work

By means of many of his toys the properties of solids have become working knowledge to him. Here, then, is our starting-point for the transition period.

After the Nursery Stage

Undoubtedly the aim of the transition class is partly to continue by means of games and dramatic play the kind of knowledge gained in the Nursery School; but it has also the task of beginning to organise such knowledge, as the grouping into tens and hundreds. This organisation of raw material and the presenting of shortened processes, as occur in the first four rules, forms the work also of the junior school. To give to a child shortened processes which he would be very unlikely to discover in less than a lifetime, is simply giving him the experience of the race, as primitive man did to his son. But the important point is to decide when a child's discovery should end and the teacher's demonstration begin.

This is the period when we are accustomed to speak of beginning "abstract" work; it is well to be clear what it means, and how it stands related to a child's need for experience. When we leave the problems of life, such as shopping, keeping records of games and making measurements for construction; and when we begin to work with pure number, we are said to be dealing with the abstract. Formerly dealing with pure number was called "simple," and dealing with actual things, such as money and measures, "compound," and they were taken in this order. But experience has reversed the process, and a child comes to see the need of abstract practice when he finds he is not quick enough or accurate enough, or his setting out seems clumsy, in actual problems. This was discussed at greater length in the chapter on Play.

For instance, he might set down the points of a game by strokes, each line representing a different opponent:

John |||||||||||||||
Henry ||||||||||
Tom |||

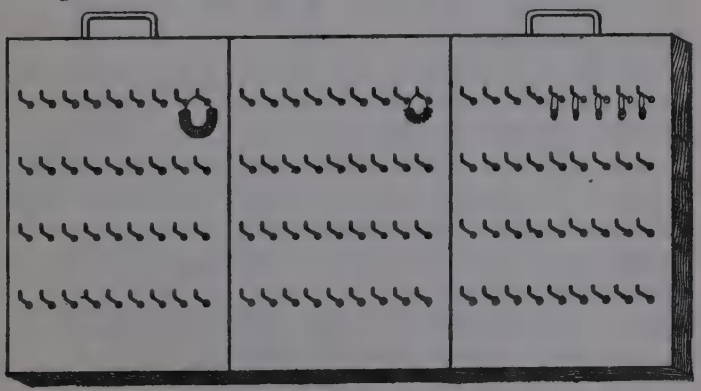
He will see how difficult it is to estimate at a glance the exact score, and how easy it is to be inaccurate. It seems the moment to show him that the idea of grouping or enclosing a certain number, and always keeping to the same grouping, is helpful:

John [||||||||||] |||||| = 1 ten and 6 singles.

Henry [||||||||||] | = 1 ten and 1 single.

Tom ||| = 3 singles.

After doing this a good many times he could be told that this is a universal method, and he would doubtless enjoy the purely puzzle pleasure in working long sums to perfect practice. This pleasure is very common in children at this stage, but too often it comes to them merely through being shown the "trick" of carrying tens. They have reached a purely abstract point, but they cannot get through it without some more material help. The following is an example of the kind of help that can be given in getting clear the concept of the ten grouping and the processes it involves:



The whole apparatus is a rectangular piece of wood about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch thick, and about $3 \times 1\frac{1}{2}$ feet of surface. It is painted white, and the horizontal bars are green, so that the divisions may be apparent at a distance; it has perpendicular divisions breaking it up into three columns, each of which contains rows of nine small dresser hooks. It can be hung on an easel or supported by its own hinge on a table. Each of the divisions represents a numerical grouping, the one on the right is for singles or units, the central one for tens, and the left side one for hundreds: the counters used are button moulds, dipped in red ink, with small loops of string to hang on the hooks: it is easily seen by a child that, after nine is reached, the units can no longer remain in their division or "house," but must be gathered together into a bunch (fastened by a safety pin) and fixed on one of the hooks of the middle division.

Sums of two or three lines can thus be set out on the horizontal bars, and in processes of addition the answer can be on the bottom line. It is very easy, by this concrete means, to see the process in subtraction, and indeed the whole difficulty of dealing with ten is made concrete. The whole of a sum can be gone through on this board with the button-moulds, and on boards and chalk with figures, side by side, thus interpreting symbol by material; but the whole process is abstract.

The piece of apparatus is less abstract only in degree than the figures on the blackboard, because neither represents real life or its problems: in abstract working we are merely going off at a side issue for the sake of practice, to make us more competent to deal with the economic affairs of life. There is a place for sticks and counters, and there is a place for money and measures, but they are not the same: the former represents the abstract and the latter the concrete problem if used as in real life: the bridge between the abstract and the concrete is largely the work of the transition class and

junior school, in respect of the foundations of arithmetic known as the first four rules.

Games of skill, very thorough shopping or keeping a bankbook, or selling tickets for tram or train, represent the kind of everyday problem that should be the centre of the arithmetic work at this transition stage; and out of the necessities of these problems the abstract and semi-abstract work should come, but it should *never* precede the real work. A real purpose should underlie it all, a purpose that is apparent and stimulating enough to produce willing practice. A child will do much to be a good shopkeeper, a good tram conductor, a good banker; he will always play the game for all it is worth.

CHAPTER XXIV

EXPERIENCES BY MEANS OF DOING

In the Nursery School activity is the chief characteristic: one of its most usual forms is experimenting with tools and materials, such as chalk, paints, scissors, paper, sand, clay and other things. The desire to experiment, to change the material in some way, to gratify the senses, especially the muscular one, may be stronger than the desire to construct. The handwork play of the Nursery School is therefore chiefly by means of imitation and experiment, and direct help is usually quite unwelcome to the child under six. There is little more to be said in the way of direction than, "Provide suitable material, give freedom, and help, if the child wants it." But the case is rather different in the transitional stage.

As the race learnt to think by doing, so children seem to approach thought in that way; they have a natural inclination to do in the first case; they try, do wrongly, consider, examine, observe, and do again: for example, a girl wants to make a doll's bonnet like the baby's; she begins impulsively to cut out the stuff, finds it too small, tries to visualise the right size, examines the real bonnet, and makes another attempt. At some apparently odd moment she stumbles on a truth, perhaps the relation of one form to another in the mazes of bonnet-making; it is at these odd moments that we learn. Or a boy may be painting a Christmas card, and in another odd moment he may *feel*

something of the beauty of colour, if, for example, he is copying holly-berries. No purposeless looking at them would have stirred appreciation. Whether the end is doing, or whether it is thinking, the two are inextricably connected; in the earlier stages the way to know and feel is very often by action, and here is the basis of the maxim that handwork is a method.

This idea has often been only half digested, and consequently it has led to a very trivial kind of application; a nature lesson of the "look and say" description has been followed by a painting lesson; a geography lesson, by the making of a model. If the method of learning by doing was the accepted aim of the teacher then it was not carried out, for this is learning and then doing, not learning for the purpose of doing, but doing for the purpose of testing the learning, which is quite another matter, and not a very natural procedure with young children. Many people have tried to make things from printed directions, a woman may try to make a blouse and a man to make a knife-box; their procedure is not to separate the doing and the learning process; probably they have first tried to do, found need for help, and gone to the printed directions, which they followed side by side with the doing; and in the light of former failures or in the course of looking or of experimenting, they stumbled upon knowledge: this is learning by doing.

Therefore the making of a box may be arithmetic, the painting of a buttercup may be nature study, the construction of a model, or of dramatic properties may be geography or history, not by any means the only way of learning, but one of the earlier ways and a very sound way; there is a purpose to serve behind it all, that will lead to very careful discrimination in selection of knowledge, and to pains taken to retain it. If this is fully understood by a teacher and she is content to take nature's way, and abide for nature's time to see results, then her methods

will be appropriately applied: she will see that she is not training a race of box-makers, but that she is guiding children to discover things that they need to know in a natural way, and ensuring that as these facts are discovered they shall be used. Consequently neither haste nor perfection of finish must cloud the aim; it is not the output that matters but the method by which the children arrive at the finished object, not forty good boxes, but forty good thinkers. Dewey has put it most clearly when he says that the right test of an occupation consists "in putting the maximum of consciousness into whatever is done." Froebel says, "What man tries to represent or do he begins to understand."

This is what we should mean by saying that handwork is a method of learning.

But handwork has its own absolute place as well. A child wants to acquire skill in this direction even more consciously than he wants to learn: if he has been free, in the nursery class, to experiment with materials, and if he knows some of his limitations, he is now, in the transition class, ready for help, and he should get it as he needs it. This may run side by side with the more didactic side of handwork which has been described, but it is more likely that in practice the two are inextricably mixed up; and this does not matter if the two ends are clear in the teacher's mind; both sides have to be reckoned with.

The important thing to know is the kind of help that should be given, and when and how it is needed. It is well to remember that in this connection a child's limitations are not final, but only mark stages: for example, in his early attempts to use thick cardboard he cannot discover the neat hinge that is made by the process known as a "half-cut"; he tries in vain to bend the cardboard, so as to secure the same result. There are two ways of helping him: either he can be quite definitely shown and

made to imitate, or he can be set to think about it; he is given a cardboard knife and allowed to experiment: if he fails, it may be suggested that a clean edge can only be got by some form of cutting; probably he will find out the rest of the process. The second method is the better one, because it promotes thinking, while the first only promotes pure imitation and the habit of reckoning on this easy solution of difficulties. A dull child may have to be shown, but there are few such children, unless they have been trained to dulness.

Imitation is not, however, always a medicine for dulness, nor does it always produce dulness. There is a time for imitation and there is a kind of imitation that is very intelligent. For example, a child may come across a toy aeroplane and wish to make one; he will examine it carefully, think over the uses of parts and proceed to make one as like it as possible: here again is the maximum of consciousness, the essence of thinking. Or the imitation may consist in following verbal directions: this is far from easy if the teacher is at all vague, and promotes valuable effort if she is clear but not diffuse: the putting of words into action necessitates a considerable amount of imagining, and the establishment of very important associations in brain centres. Such cases might occur in connection with weaving, cardboard and paper work, or the more technical processes of drawing and painting, where race experience is actually *given* to a child, by means of which he leaps over the experiences of centuries. This is progress.

If a teacher is to take handwork seriously, and not as a pretty recreation with pleasing results, she should be fully conscious of all that it means, and apply this definitely in her work: it is so easy to be trivial while appearing to be thorough by having well-finished work produced, which has necessitated little hard thinking on the child's part. Construction gives a sense of power, a strengthening of the

will, ability to concentrate on a purpose in learning, a social sense of serviceableness, a deepened individuality: but this can only be looked for if a child is allowed to approach it in the right way, first as an experimenter and investigator, or as an artist, and afterwards as a learner, who is also an individual, and learns in his own way and at his own rate: but if the teacher's ambition is external and economic then the child is a tool in her hands, and will remain a tool. We cannot expect the fruits of the spirit if our goal is a material one.

One of the lessons of the war is economy. In handwork this has come to us through the quest for materials, but it has been a blessing, if now and then in disguise. In the more formal period of handwork only prepared, almost patented material was used; everything was "requisitioned" and eager manufacturers supplied very highly finished stuff. Not very many years ago, the keeper of a "Kindergarten" stall at an exhibition said, while pointing to cards cut and printed with outlines for sewing and pricking, "We have so many orders for these that we can afford to lay down considerable plant for their production." An example in another direction is that of a little girl who attended one of the best so-called Kindergartens of the time: she was afflicted, while at home, with the "don't know what to do" malady; her mother suggested that she might make some of the things she made at school, but she negatived that at once with the remark, "I couldn't do that, you see, because we have none of the right kind of stuff to make them of here."

It is quite unnecessary to give more direct details as to the kind of work suitable and the method of doing it; more than enough books of help have been published on every kind of material, and it might perhaps be well if we made less use of such terms as "clay-modelling, "cardboard-work," "raffia," and took handwork more in the sense of

constructive or expressive work, letting the children select one or several media for their purpose; they ought to have access to a variety of material, and except when they waste, they should use it freely. It is limiting and unenlightened to put down a special time for the use of special material, if the end might be better answered by something else: if modelling is at 11.30 on Monday and children are anxious to make Christmas presents, what law in heaven or earth are we obeying if we stick to modelling except the law of Red Tape.

CHAPTER XXV

EXPERIENCES OF THE LIFE OF MAN

THIS aspect of experience comes in two forms, the life of man in the past, with the memorials and legacies he has left, and the life of man in the present under the varying conditions of climate and all that it involves. In other words these experiences are commonly known as history and geography, though in the earlier stages of their appearance in school it is perhaps better to call the work—preparation for history and geography. They would naturally appear in the transition or the junior class, preferably in the latter, but they need not be wholly new subjects to a child; his literature has prepared him for both; to some extent his experiments in handwork have prepared him for history, while his nature work, especially his excursions and records, have prepared him for geography. That he needs this extension of experience can be seen in his growing demands for true stories, true in the more literal sense which he is coming fast to appreciate; undoubtedly most children pass through a stage of extreme literalism between early childhood and what is generally recognised as boyhood and girlhood. They begin to ask questions regarding the past, they are interested in things from "abroad," however vague that term may be to them.

Perhaps it will be best to treat the two subjects separately, though like all the child's curriculum at this stage

they are inextricably confused and mingled both with each other, and with literature, as experiences of man's life and conduct.

The beginnings of geography lie in the child's foundations of experience. Probably the first real contact, unconscious though it may be, that any child has in this connection is through the production of food and clothing. A country child sees some of the beginnings of both, but it is doubtful how much of it is really interpreted by him; the village shop with its inexhaustible stores probably means much more in the way of origins, and he may never go behind its contents in his speculations. It is true he sees milking, harvesting, sheep-shearing, and many other operations, but he often misses the stage between the actual beginning and the finished product—between the wool on the sheep's back and his Sunday clothes, between the wheat in the field and his loaf of bread. The town child has many links if he can use them: the goods train, the docks, the grocer's, green-grocer's or draper's shop, foreigners in the street, the vans that come through the silent streets in the early morning; in big towns, such markets as Covent Garden or Leadenhall or Smithfield; such a river as the Thames, Humber or Mersey—from any one of these beginnings he can reach out from his own small environment to the world. A town child has very confused notions of what a farm really means to national life, and a country child of what a big railway station or dock involves. All children need to know what other parts of their own land look like, and what is produced; they ought to trace the products within reach to their origin, and this will involve descriptions of such things as fisheries at Hull or Aberdeen, the coal mines of Wales or Lanarkshire, pottery districts of Stafford, woollen and cotton factories of Yorkshire and Lancashire, mills driven by steam, wind and water, lighthouses, the sheep-rearing districts of Cumberland and

Midlothian, the flax-growing of northern Ireland, and much else, and the means of transit and communication between all these. The children will gradually realise that many of the things they are familiar with, such as tea, oranges, silk and sugar, have not been accounted for, and this will take them to the lives of people in other countries, the means of getting there, the time taken and mode of travelling. They will also come to see that we do not produce enough of the things that are possible to grow, such as wheat, apples, wool and many other common necessaries, and that we can spare much that is manufactured to countries that do not make them, such as boots, clothes, china and cutlery. There will come a time when the need for a map is apparent: that is the time to branch off from the main theme and make one; it will have to be of the very immediate surroundings first, but it is not difficult to make the leap soon to countries beyond. Previous to the need for it, map-making is useless.

This working outwards from actual experiences, from the home country to the foreign, from actual contact with real things to things of travellers' tales, is the only way to bring geography to the very door of the school, to make it part of the actual life.

The beginning of history, as of geography, lies in the child's foundations of experience. In the country village he sees the church, possibly some old cottages, or an Elizabethan or Jacobean house near; in the churchyard or in the church the tombstones have quaint inscriptions with reference possibly to past wars or to early colonisation. The slum child on the other hand sees much that is worn out, but little that is antiquated, unless the slum happen to be in such places as Edinburgh or Deptford, situated among the remains of really fine houses: but he realises more of the technicalities and officialism of a social system than does the country child; the suburban child has prob-

ably the scantiest store of all; his district is presumably made up of rows of respectable but monotonous houses, and the social life is similarly respectable and monotonous.

There are certain cravings, interests and needs, common to all children, which come regardless of surroundings. All children want to know certain things about people who lived before them, not so much their great doings as their smaller ones; they want to know what these people were like, what they worked at, and learnt, how they travelled, what they bought and sold: and there is undoubtedly a primitive strain in all children that comes out in their love of building shelters, playing at savages, and making things out of natural material. One of the most intense moments in *Peter Pan* to many children is the building of the little house in the wood, and later on, of the other on the top of the trees: that is the little house of their dreams. They are not interested in constitutions or the making of laws; wars and invasions have much the same kind of interest for them as the adventures of Una and the Red Cross Knight.

How are these cravings usually satisfied in the early stages of history teaching of to-day? As a rule a series of biographies of notable people is given, regardless of chronology, or the children's previous experiences, and equally careless of the history lessons of the future; Joan of Arc, Alfred and the Cakes, Gordon of Khartoum, Boadicea, Christopher Columbus, Julius Cæsar, form a list which is not at all uncommon; there is no leading thread, no developing idea, and the old test, "the children like it," excuses indolent thinking. On the other hand, the desire to know more of the Robinson Crusoe mode of life has been apparent to many teachers for some time, but the material at their disposal has been scanty and uncertain. It is to Prof. Dewey that we owe the right organisation of this part of history. He has shown that it is on the side of

industry, the early modes of weaving, cooking, lighting and heating, making implements for war and for hunting, and making of shelters, that prehistoric man has a real contribution to give: but for the beginnings of social life, for realisation of such imperishable virtues as courage, patriotism and self-sacrifice, children must go to the lives of real people and gradually acquire the idea that certain things are, so to speak, from "everlasting to everlasting," while others change with changing and growing circumstances.

The prehistoric history should be largely concerned with doing and experimenting, with making weapons, or firing clay, or weaving rushes, or with visits to such museums as Horniman's at Forest Hill. The early social history may well take the form best suited to the child, and not appeal merely to surface interest. And the spirit in which the lives of other people are presented to children must not be the narrow, prejudiced, insular one, so long associated with the people of Great Britain, which calls other customs, dress, modes of living, "funny" or "absurd" or "extraordinary," but rather the scientific spirit that interprets life according to its conditions and so builds up one of its greatest laws, the law of environment.

The geography syllabus, even more than the history one, depends for its beginnings at least on the surroundings of the school—out of the mass of possible materials a very rich and comprehensive syllabus can be made, beginning with any one of the central points already suggested. Above all there should be plenty of pictures, not as amplification, but as material, by means of which a child may interpret more fully; a picture should be of the nature of a problem or of a map—and picture reading should be in the junior school what map reading is in the upper school.

In both history and geography the method is partly that of discovery; especially is this the case in that part of history

which deals with primitive industries, and in almost the whole of the geography of this period. The teacher is the guide or leader in discovery, not the story-teller merely, though this may be part of his function.

The following is a small part of a syllabus to show how geography and history material may grow naturally out of the children's experiences. It is meant in this case for children in a London suburb, with no particular characteristics :—

GEOGRAPHY

It grows out of the shops of the neighbourhood and the adjoining railway system.

Home-produced Goods—

A. The green-grocer's shop.
Tracing of fruit to its own home source, or to a foreign country.
Home-grown fruit. The fruit farm, garden, orchard, and wood.
The packing and sending of fruit.—Railway lines.
Covent Garden ; the docks ; fruit stalls ; jam factories.

B. A grocer's or corn-chandler's shop.
Flour and oatmeal traced to their sources.
The farm. A wheat and grain farm at different seasons.
A dairy farm and a sheep farm.
A mill and its processes.
Woollen factories.
A dairy. Making of butter and cheese
Distribution of these goods.

C. A china shop, leading to the pottery district and making of pottery.

Foreign Goods—

Furs—Red Indians and Canada.
Dates—The Arabs and the Sahara.
Cotton—The Negroes and equatorial regions.
Cocoa—The West Indies.
The transit of these, their arrival and distribution.

[The need for a map will come early in the first part of the course, and the need for a globe in the second.]

HISTORY

This grows naturally out of the geography syllabus and might be taken side by side or afterwards.

The development of industries.

The growth of spinning and weaving from the simplest processes, bringing in the distaff, spinning-wheel, and loom.

The making of garments from the joining together of furs.

The growth of pottery and the development of cooking.

The growth of roads and means of transit.

[This will involve a good deal of experimental and constructive handwork.]

CHAPTER XXVI

EXPERIENCES RECORDED AND PASSED ON

READING and writing are held to have lifted man above the brute; they are the means by which we can discover and record human experience and progress, and as such their value is incalculable. But in themselves they are artificial conventions, symbols invented for the convenience of mankind, and to acquire them we need exercise no great mental power. A good eye and ear memory, and a certain superficial quickness to recognise and apply previous knowledge, is all that is needed for reading and spelling; while for writing, the development of a specialised muscular skill is all that is necessary. In themselves they do not as a rule hold any great interest for a child: sometimes they have the same puzzle interest as a long addition sum, and to children of a certain type, mechanical work such as writing gives relief; one of the most docile and uninteresting of little boys said that writing was his favourite subject, and it was easy to understand: he did not want to be stirred out of his commonplaceness; unconsciously he had assimilated the atmosphere and adopted the standards of his surroundings, which were monotonous and commonplace in the exreme, and so he desired no more adventurous method of expression than the process of writing, which he could do well. Imitation is often a strong incentive to reading, it is part of the craving for grown-upness to many children:

they desire to do what their brothers and sisters can do. But *during the first stage of childhood, roughly up to the age of six or even later, no child needs to learn to read or write, taking "need" in the psychological sense:* that period is concerned with laying the foundation of real things and with learning surroundings;—any records of experience that come to a child can come as they did to his earliest forefathers—by word of mouth. When he wants to read stories for himself, or write his own letters, then he is impelled by a sufficiently strong aim or incentive to make concentration possible, without resorting to any of the fantastic devices and apparatus so dear to so many teachers. Indeed it is safe to say of many of these devices that they prove the fact that children are not ready for reading.

When a child is ready to read and write the process need not be a long one: by wise delay many tedious hours are saved, tedious to both teacher and children; they have already learnt to talk in those precious hours, to discriminate sounds as part of language training, but without any resort to symbols—merely as something natural. It has been amply proved that if a child is not prematurely forced into reading he can do as much in one year as he would have done in three, under more strained conditions.

With regard to methods a great deal has been written on the subject; it is pretty safe to leave a teacher to choose her own—for much of the elaboration is unnecessary if reading is rightly delayed, and if a child can read reasonably well at seven and a half there can be no grounds for complaint. If his phonetic training has been good in the earlier stages of language, then this may be combined with the "look and say" method, or method of reading by whole words. The "cat on the mat" type of book is disappearing, and its place is being taken by books where the subject matter is interesting and suitable to the child's age; but in other subjects the book chosen should

be considered in reference to the child's surroundings, either to amplify or to extend.

Writing is, in the first instance, a part of reading: when words are being learnt they must be written, or in the earliest stages printed, but only those interesting to the children and written for some definite purpose should be selected: a great aid to spelling is transcription, and children are always willing to copy something they like, such as a verse of poetry, or their name and address. As in arithmetic and in handwork, they will come to recognise the need for practice, and be willing to undergo such exercise for the sake of improvement, as well as for the pleasure in the activity—which actual writing gives to some children.

We must be quite clear about relative values. Reading and writing are necessities, and the means of opening up to us things of great value; but the art of acquiring them is of little intrinsic value, and the recognition of the need is not an early one; nothing is gained by beginning too early, and much valuable time is taken from other activities, notably language. The incentive should be the need that the child feels, and when this is evident time and pains should be given to the subject so that it may be quickly acquired. But the art of reading is no test of intelligence, and the art of writing is no test of original skill. *The claims of the upper departments must be resisted.*

CHAPTER XXVII

THE THINGS THAT REALLY MATTER

THE *first* thing that matters is what is commonly called the personality of the teacher; she must be a person, unmistakable from other persons, and not a type; what she has as an individual, of gifts or goodness, she should give freely, and give in her own way; that she should be trained is, of course, as indisputable as the training of a doctor, but her training should have deepened her personality. Pestalozzi's curriculum and organisation left much to be desired; what he has handed down to us came from himself and his own experience, not from anything superimposed: records of his pupils constantly emphasise this: it was his goodness assimilated with his outlook on life and readiness to learn by experience, that mattered, and it was this that remained with his pupils. The teacher's own personality must dominate her choice of principles else she is a dead method, a machine, and not a living teacher. She must not keep her interests and gifts for out-of-school use; if she has a sense of humour she must use it, if she is fond of pretty clothes she must wear them in school, if she appreciates music she must help her class to do the same, if she has dramatic gifts she must act to them. Her standard of goodness must be high, and she must be strong enough to adopt it practically, so that she is unconscious of it: goodness and righteousness are as essential as health to a teacher: for something intangible passes from

the teacher to her children, however young and unconscious they may be, and nothing can awaken goodness but goodness.

Part of her personality is her attitude towards religion. It is difficult to think of a teacher of young children who is not religious, *i.e.* whose conduct is not definitely permeated by her spiritual life: young children are essentially religious, and the life of the spirit must find a response in the same kind of intangible assumption of its existence as goodness. No form of creed or dogma is meant, only the life of the spirit common to all. But of course there may be people who refuse to admit this as a necessity.

The *next* thing that matters is that all children must be regarded as individuals: there has been much more talk of this lately, but practical difficulties are often raised as a bar. If teachers and parents continue to accept the conditions which make it difficult, such as large classes, and a need to hasten, there will always be a bar: if individuality is held as one of the greatest things in education, authorities cannot continue to economise so as to make it impossible. It is the individual part of each child that is his most precious possession, his immortal side: Froebel calls it his "divine essence," and makes the cultivation of it the aim of education; he is right, and any more general aim will lead only to half-developed human beings. If we accept the principle that only goodness is fundamental and evil a distortion of nature, we need have no fear about cultivating individuals. Every doctor assures us that all normal babies are naturally healthy; they are also naturally good, but evil is easily aroused by arbitrary interference or by mismanagement.

The *third* thing that matters belongs more especially to the intellectual life; it might be described as the making of right associations. More than any other side of training, the making of associations means the making of the intelligent person. To see life in patches is to see pieces of

a great picture by the square inch, and never to see the relationship of these to each other—never to see the whole.

The *fourth* thing that matters is the making of good and serviceable habits: much has been said on this, in connection with the nursery class, and it is at that stage that the process is most important, but it should never cease. If a child is to have time and opportunity to develop his individuality he must not be hampered by having to be conscious of things that belong to the subconscious region. To start a child with a foundation of good habits is better than riches.

The *fifth* thing that matters is the realisation by teachers that *opportunities* matter more than results; opportunities to discover, to learn, to comprehend all sides of life, to be an individual, to appreciate beauty, to go at one's own rate; some are material in their nature, such as the actual surroundings of the child in school; others are rather in the atmosphere, such as refraining from interference, encouragement, suggestion, spirituality. The teacher has the making of opportunities largely in her own hands.

The *sixth* thing that matters is the cultivation of the divine gift of imagination; both morality and spirituality spring from this; meanness, cowardice, lack of sympathy, sensuality, materialism, quickly grow where there is no imagination. It refines and intensifies personality, it opens a door to things beyond the senses. It makes possible appreciation of the things of the spirit, and appreciation is a thousand times more important than knowledge.

The *last* thing that matters is the need for freedom from bondage, of the body and of the soul. Only from a free atmosphere can come the best things—personality, imagination and opportunity; and all are great needs. but the greatest of all is freedom.

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